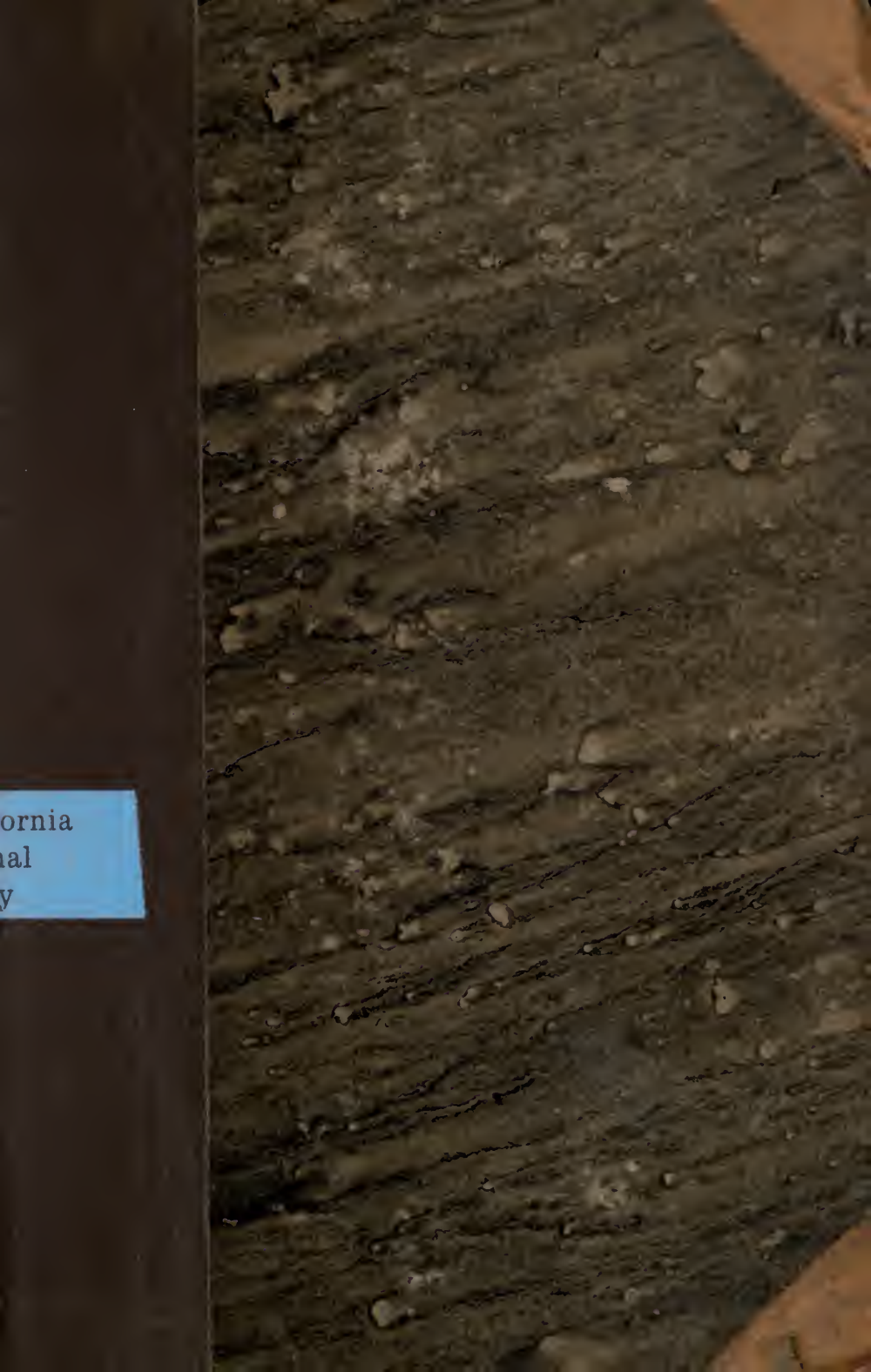
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APPENDIX

TO

THE FABLES.

This Appendix contains the Original Tales of Chaucer, which Dryden has modernized. The Novels of Boccacio are subjoined to the several Poetical English Versions.

THE

KNIGHTES TALE,

BY

GEOFFREY CHAUCER.

Whilom, as old stories tellen us,
There was a duk that highte Theseus;
Of Athenes he was lord and governour,
And in his time swiche a conquerour,
That greter was ther non under the sonne;
Ful many a riche contree had he wonne.
What with his wisdom and his chevalrie,
He conquerd all the regne of Feminie,
That whilom was ycleped Scythia,
And wedded the fresshe Quene Ipolita,
And brought hire home with him to his contree
With mochel glorie and solempnitee,
And eke hire yonge suster Emelie.
And thus with victorie and with melodie
Let I this worthy duk to Athenes ride,
And all his host in armes him beside.
And certes, if it n'ere to long to here,
I wolde have told you fully the manere

How wonnen was the regne of Feminię
By Theseus, and by his chevalrie:
And of the grete bataille for the nones
Betwix Athenes and Amasones:
And how asseged was Ipolita,
The faire hardie quene of Scythia;
And of the feste, that was at hire wedding,
And of the temple at hire home coming:
But all this thing I moste as now forbere;
I have, God wot, a large feld to ere,
And weke ben the oxen in my plowe:
The remenent of my tale is long ynow.
I wil not letten eke non of this route;
Let every felaw telle his tale aboute,
And let se now who shal the souper winne,
There as I left, I will agen beginne.
This duk, of whom I made mentioun,
Whan he was comen almost to the toun,
In all his wele and his moste pride,
He was ware, as he cast his eye aside,
Wher that ther kneled in the highe wey
A compagnie of ladies, twey and twey,
Eche after other, clad in clothes blake;
But swiche a crie and swiche a wo they make,
That in this world n'is creature living
That ever heard swiche another waimenting;
And of this crie ne wolde never stenten,
Till they the reines of his bridel henten.
What folk be ye that at min home coming
Perturben so my feste with crying?
Quod Theseus; have ye so grete envie
Of min honour, that thus complaine and crie?
Or who hath you misboden, or offended?
Do telle me, if that it may be amended,
And why ye be thus clothed all in blake?
The oldest lady of hem all than spake,
Whan she had swouned with a dedly chere,
That it was reuthe for to seen and here.
She sayde, Lord, to whom Fortune hath yeven
Victorie, and as a conqueror to liven,
Nought greveth us your glorie and your honour,
But we beseke you of mercie and socour:
Have mercie on our wo and our distresse:
Some drope of pitee thrugh thy gentillesse
Upon us wretched wimmen let now fall;
For certes, lord, there n'is non of us alle

That she n'hath ben a duchesse or a quene;
Now be we caitives, as it is wel sene:
Thanked be Fortune, and hire false whele,
That non estat ensureth to be wele.
And certes, lord, to abiden your presence,
Here in this temple of the goddesse Clemence,
We han ben waiting all this fourtenight:
Now help us, lord, sin it lieth in thy might.
I wretched wight, that wepe and waile thus,
Was whilom wif to King Capaneus,
That starfe at Thebes, cursed be that day,
And alle we that ben in this aray,
And maken all this lamentation,
We losten all our husbondes at that toun,
While that the siege therabouten lay:
And yet now the old Creon, wala wa!
That lord is now of Thebes the citee,
Fulfilled of ire and of iniquittee,
He for despit, and for his tyrannie,
To don the ded bodies a vilanie,
Of alle our lordes, which that ben yslawe,
Hath alle the bodies on an hepe ydrawe,
And will not suffren hem by non assent
Neyther to ben yberied, ne ybrent,
But maketh houndes ete hem in despite.
And with that word, withouten more respite,
They fallen groff, and crien pitously,
Have on us wretched wimmen som mercy,
And let our sorwe sinken in thin herte.
This gentil duk doun from his courser sterte,
With herte piteous, whan he herd hem speke.
Him thoughte that his herte wold all to-breke
When he saw hem so pitous and so mate
That whilom weren of so gret estate,
And in his armes, he hem all up hente,
And hem comforted in ful good entente,
And swore his oth, as he was trewe knight,
He wolde don so ferforthly his might
Upon the tyrant Creon hem to wreke,
That all the peple of Grece shulde speke
How Creon was of Theseus yserved;
As he that hath his deth ful wel deserved.
And right anon, withouten more abode,
His banner he displaide, and forth he rode
To Thebes ward, and all his host beside:
No ner Athenes n'olde he go ne ride,

Ne take his ese fully half a day,
But onward on his way that night he lay,
And sent anon Ipolita the quene,
And Emeli hire yonge sister shene,
Unto the toun of Athenes for to dwell;
And forth he rit; ther n'is no more to tell.
The red statue of Mars, with spere and targe,
So shineth in his white banner large,
That all the feldes gliteren up and doun;
And by his banner borne is his penoun,
Of golde ful riche, in which ther was ybete
The Minotaure, which that he slew in Crete.
Thus rit this duk, thus rit this conquerour,
And in his host of chevalrie the flour,
Til that he came to Thebes, and alight
Fayre in a felde, ther as he thought to fight:
But shortly for to speken of this thing,
With Creon, which that was of Thebes king,
He fought and slew him manly as a knight
In plaine bataille, and put his folk to flight;
And by assaut he wan the citee after,
And rent adoun bothe wall, and sparre, and rafter;
And to the ladies he restored again
The bodies of hir housbondes that were slain,
To don the obsequies, as was tho the gise.
But it were all to long for to devise
The grete clamour and the waimenting
Whiche that the ladies made at the brenning
Of the bodies, and the gret honour
That Theseus, the noble conquerour,
Doth to the ladies whan they from him wente;
But shortly for to telle is min entente.
Whan that this worthy duk, this Theseus,
Hath Creon slain, and wonnen Thebes thus,
Still in the feld he toke all night his reste,
And did with all the countree as hem leste;
To ransake in the tas of bodies dede,
Hem for to stripe of harneis and of wede,
The pillours dide hir businesse and cure,
After the bataille and discomfiture;
And so befell, that, in the tas, they found,
Thurgh girt with many a grevous blody wound,
Two yonge knightes ligging by and by,
Bothe in on armes, wrought ful richely;
Of whiche two, Arcite highte that on,
And he that other highte Palamon.

Not fully quik, ne fully ded they were,
But by hir cote armure, and by hir gere,
The heraudes knew hem wel in special,
As tho that weren of the blod real
Of Thebes, and of sustren two yborne:
Out of the tas the pillours han hem torne,
And han hem carried soft unto the tente
Of Theseus, and he ful sone hem sente
To Athenes, for to dwellen in prison
Perpetuel, he n'olde no raunson.
And whan this worthy duk had thus ydon,
He toke his host, and home he rit anon,
With laurel crouned as a conquerour;
And ther he liveth in joye and in honour,
Terme of his lif; what nedeth wordes mo?
And in a tour, in anguish and in wo,
Dwellen this Palamon, and eke Arcite,
For evermo, ther may no gold hem quite.

Thus passeth yere by yere, and day by day,
Till it fell ones, in a morwe of May,
That Emilie, that fayrer was to sene
Than is the lilie upon the stalke grene,
And fressher than the May with floures new,
(For with the rose colour strof hire hewe,
I n'ot which was the finer of hem two,)
Er it was day, as she was wont to do,
She was arisen, and all redy dight;
For May wol have no slogardie a-night:
The season priketh every gentil herte,
And maketh him out of his slepe to sterte,
And sayth, Arise, and do thin observance.

This maketh Emelie han remembraunce
To don honour to May, and for to rise;
Yclothed was she fresshe for to devise;
Hire yelwe here was broided in a tresse
Behind hire back, a yerde long I gesse;
And in the gardin at sonne uprist,
She walketh up and doun wher as hire list;
She gathereth floures, partie white and red,
To make a sotel garland for hire hed;
And as an angel hevenlich she song:
The grete tour that was so thikke and strong,
Which, of the castel, was the chef dongeon
(Wher as these knightes weren in prison,
Of which I tolde you, and tellen shal,)
Was even joinant to the gardin wall,

Ther as this Emelie had hire playing.
Bright was the sonne, and clere that morwening,
And Palamon, this woful prisoner,
As was his wone, by leve of his gayler,
Was risen, and romed in a chambre on high,
In which he all the noble citee seigh,
And eke the gardin ful of branches grene,
Ther as this fresshe Emelie the shene
Was in hire walk, and romed up and doun.
This sorweful prisoner, this Palamon,
Goth in his chambre roming to and fro,
And to himselfe complaining of his wo:
That he was borne, ful oft he sayd, Alas!
And so befel, by aventure, or cas,
That thrugh a window thikke of many a barre
Of yren gret, and square as any sparre,
He cast his eyen upon Emilia,
And therwithal he blent, and cried, A!
As though he stongen were unto the herte.
And with that crie Arcite anon up sterte,
And saide, Cosin min, what eyleth thee,
That art so pale and dedly for to see?
Why cridest thou? who hath thee don offence?
For Goddes love, take all in patience
Our prison, for it may non other be,
Fortune hath yeven us this adversite:
Som wikke aspect or disposition
Of Saturne, by som constellation,
Hath yeven us this, although we had it sworn:
So stood the heven, when that we were born;
We moste endure; this is the short and plain.
This Palamon answerde, and sayde again,
Cosin, forsoth of this opinion
Thou hast a vaine imagination;
This prison caused me not to crie,
But I was hurt right now thurghout min eye
Into min herte, that wol my bane be.
The fayrenesse of a lady that I se
Yond in the gardin, roming to and fro,
Is cause of all my crying and wo:
I n'ot whe'r she be woman or goddesse,
But Venus is it, sothly, as I gesse.
And therwithall on knees adoun he fill,
And sayde, Venus, if it be your will
You in this gardin thus to transfigure,
Beforn me sorweful wretched creature,

Out of this prison helpe that we may scape,
And if so be our destine be shape
By eterne word, to dien in prison,
Of our lignage have som compassion,
That is so low ybrought by tyrannie.
And with that word Arcita gan espie
Wher as this lady romed to and fro,
And with that sight hire beaute hurt him so,
That if that Palamon was wounded sore,
Arcite is hurt as moche as he, or more:
And with a sigh he sayde pitously,
The fresshe beutee sleth me sodenly,
Of hire that rometh in yonder place.
And but I have hire mercie and hire grace,
That I may seen hire at the leste way,
I n'am but ded, there n'is no more to say.
This Palamon, whan he these wordes herd,
Dispitously he loked, and answerd,
Whether sayest thou this in ernest or in play?
Nay, quod Arcite, in ernest be my fay;
God helpe me so, me lust full yvel play.
This Palamon gan knit his browes twey:
It were, quod he, to thee no gret honour
For to be false, ne for to be traytour
To me, that am thy cosin and thy brother:
Ysworne ful depe, and eche of us to other,
That neuer for to dien in the peine,
Till that the deth departen shal us tweine,
Neyther of us in love to hindre other,
Ne in non other cas, my leve brother;
But that thou shuldest trewely forther me
In evry cas, as I shuld forther thee.
This was thin oth, and min also certain,
I wot it wel thou darst it not withsain:
Thus art thou of my conseil out of doute,
And now thou woldest falsly ben aboute
To love my lady, whom I love and serve,
And ever shal, til that min herte sterve.
Now certes, false Arcite, thou shalt not so;
I loved hire firste, and tolde thee my wo,
As to my conseil, and to my brother sworne
To forther me, as I have tolde beforne,
For which thou art ybounden as a knight
To helpen me, if it lie in thy might;
Or elles art thou false, I dare wel sain.
This Arcita full proudly spake again:

Thou shalt, quod he, be rather false than I,
And thou art false, I tell thee utterly.
For *par amour* I loved hire first, or thou.
What wolt thou sayn, thou wistest nat right now
Whether she were a woman or a goddesse:
Thin is affection of holinesse,
And min is love as to a creature,
For which I tolde thee min aventure,
As to my cosin, and my brother sworne.
I pose, that thou lovedst hire beforne:
Wost thou not wel the olde clerkes sawe,
That who shall give a lover any lawe?
Love is a greter lawe, by my pan,
Than may be yeven of any erthly man;
And therfore positif lawe, and swiche decree
Is broken all day for love in eche degree.
A man moste nedes love, maugre his hed;
He may nat fleen it though he shuld be ded,
All be she maid, or widewe, or elles wif.
And eke it is not likely all thy lif
To stonden in hire grace, no more shal I;
For well thou wost thyselven veraily,
That thou and I be damned to prison
Perpetuel, us gaineth no raunson.
We strive, as did the houndes for the bone,
They fought all day, and yet hir part was none:
Ther came a kyte, while that they were so wrothe,
And bare away the bone betwix hem bothe:
And, therfore, at kinges court, my brother,
Eche man for himself, ther is non other.
Love if thee lust, for I love, and ay shal;
And sothly, leve brother, this is al.
Here in this prison mosten we endure,
And everich of us take his aventure.
Great was the strif, and long, betwix hem twey,
If that I hadde leiser for to sey;
But to the effect. It happed on a day,
(To tell it you as shortly as I may,)
A worthy duk that highte Perithous,
That felaw was to this duk Theseus
Sin thilke day that they were children lite,
Was come to Athenes, his felaw to visite,
And for to play, as he was wont to do,
For in this world he loved no man so;
And he loved him as tenderly again:
So well they loved, as old bokes sain,

That whan that on was ded, sothly to tell,
His felaw wente and sought him doun in hell;
But of that storie list me not to write.
Duk Perithous loved wel Arcite,
And had him knowe at Thebes yere by yere,
And finally, at request and praiere
Of Perithous, withouten any raunson,
Duk Theseus let him out of prison,
Frely to gon wher that him list over all,
In swiche a gise as I you tellen shall.
This was the forword, plainly for to endite,
Betwixen Theseus and him Arcite:
That if so were, that Arcite were yfound
Ever in his lif, by day or night, o stound
In any countree of this Theseus,
And he were caught, it was accorded thus,
That with a swerd he shulde lese his hed;
Ther was non other remedie, ne rede.
But taketh his leve, and homeward he him speede:
Let him beware, his nekke lieth to wedde.
How great a sorwe suffereth now Arcite?
The deth he feleth thurgh his herte smite:
He wepeth, waileth, crieth pitously,
To sleen himself he waiteth prively.
He said, Alas the day that I was borne!
Now is my prison werse than beforne;
Now is me shape eternally to dwelle
Not only in purgatorie, but in helle.
Alas! that ever I knew Perithous,
For elles had I dwelt with Theseus,
Yfetered in his prison evermo,
Than had I ben in blisse, and not in wo:
Only the sight of hire, whom that I serve,
Though that I never hire grace may deserve,
Wold have sufficed right ynough for me.
O dere cosin Palamon, quod he,
Thin is the victorie of this aventure;
Ful blisful in prison maiest thou endure:
In prison! certes nay, but in paradise.
Wel hath Fortune yturned thee the dise,
That hast the sight of hire, and I the absence.
For possible is, sin thou hast hire presence,
And art a knight, a worthy and an able,
That by some cas, sin Fortune is changeable,
Thou maiest to thy desir somtime atteine:
But I that am exiled, and barreine

Of alle grace, and in so gret despaire,
That ther n'is erthe, water, fire, ne aire,
Ne creature, that of hem maked is,
That may me hele or don comfort in this,
Wel ought I sterve in wanhope and distresse.
Farewel my lif, my lust, and my gladnesse.
Alas! why plainen men so in commune
Of purveiance of God, or of Fortune,
That yeveth hem ful oft in many a gise,
Wel better than they can hemself devise;
Som man desireth for to have richesse,
That cause is of his murdre or gret siknesse;
And som man wold out of his prison fayne,
That in his house is of his meinie slain.
Infinite harmes ben in this matere,
We wote not what thing that we praien here.
We saren as he that dronke is as a mous:
A dronken man wot wel he hath an hous,
But he ne wot which the right way thider,
And to a dronken man the way is slider.
And certes in this world so faren we;
We seken fast after felicite,
But we go wrong ful often trewely.
Thus we may sayen alle, and namely I,
That wende, and had a gret opinion,
That if I might escapen fro prison,
Than I had ben in joye and parfite hele,
Ther now I am exiled fro my wele.
Sin that I may not seen you, Emelie,
I n'am but ded; there n'is no remedie.
Upon that other side Palamon,
Whan that he wist Arcita was agon,
Swiche sorwe he maketh, that the grete tour
Resouned of his yelling and clamour.
The pure fetters on his shinnes grete
Were of his bitter salte teres wete.
Alas! quod he, Arcita, cosin min,
Of all our strif, God wot, the frute is thin.
Thou walkest now in Thebes at thy large,
And of my wo, thou yevest litel charge.
Thou maist, sith thou hast wisdom and manhede,
Assemblen all the folk of our kinrede,
And make werre so sharpe in this contree,
That by som aventure, or som tretee,
Thou maist have hire to lady and to wif,
For whom that I must nedes lese my lif.

For, as by way of possibilitee,
Sith thou art at thy large of prison free,
And art a lord, gret is thine avantage,
More than is min, that sterve her in a cage;
For I may wepe and waile, while that I live,
With all the wo that prison may me yeve,
And eke with peine that love me yeveth also,
That doubleth all my tourment and my wo.
Therwith the fire of jalousie up sterte
Within his brest, and hent him by the herte
So woodly, that he like was to behold
The boxe-tree, or the ashen, ded and cold.
Than said he: O cruel goddes, that governe
This world with binding of your word eterne,
And writen in the table of athamant,
Your parlement, and your eterne grant,
What is mankind more unto yhold
Than is the shepe, that rouketh in the fold?
For slain is man, right as another beest,
And dwelleth eke in prison, and arrest,
And hath siknesse, and gret adversite,
And often times gilteles parde.
What governance is in this prescience,
That gilteless turmenteth innocence?
And yet encreseth this all my penance,
That man is bounden to his observance,
For Goddes sake to leten of his will,
Ther as a beest may all his lust fulfill:
And when a beest is ded, he hath no peine;
But man, after his deth, mote wepe and pleine,
Though in this world he have care and wo,
Withouten doute it maye stonden so.
The answer of this lete I to divines,
But wel I wote, that in this world gret pine is.
Alas! I see a serpent or a thefe,
That many a trewe man hath do meschefe,
Gon at his large, and wher him lust may turn.
But I moste ben in prison thurgh Saturn,
And eke thurgh Juno, jalous and eke wood,
That hath wel neye destruied all the blood
Of Thebes, with his waste walles wide;
And Venus sleeth me on that other side,
For jalousie, and fere of him, Arcite.
Now wol I stent of Palamon a lite,
And leten him in his prison still dwelle,
And of Arcita forth I wol you telle.

The sommer passeth, and the nightes long,
Encresen double wise the peines strong
Both of the lover and of the prisoner;
I n'ot which hath the wofuller mistere:
For, shortly for to say, this Palamon
Perpetuelly is damned to prison,
In chaines and in fetters to ben ded;
And Arcite is exiled on his hed
For evermore, as out of that contree,
Ne never more he shal his lady see.
You lovers, axe I now this question,
Who hath the werse, Arcite, or Palamon?
That on may se his lady day by day,
But in prison moste he dwellen alway:
That other wher him lust may ride or go,
But sen his lady shal he never mo.
Now demeth as you liste, ye that can,
For I wil tell you forth, as I began.
When that Arcite to Thebes comen was,
Ful oft a day he swelt, and said, Alas!
For sen his lady shal he neuer mo.
And, shortly, to concluden all his wo,
So mochel sorwe hadde never creature
That is or shal be while the world may dure.
His slepe, his mete, his drinke, is him byraft,
That lene he wex, and drie as is a shaft.
His eyen holwe, and grisly to behold,
His hewe salowe, and pale as ashen cold;
And solitary he was, and ever alone,
And wailing all the night, making mone;
And if he herde song or instrument,
Than would he wepe, he mighte not be stent:
So feble were his spirites, and so low,
And changed so, that no man coude know
His speche ne his vois, though men it herd.
And in his gere, for all the world he ferd,
Nought only like the lovers maladie,
Of Ereos, but rather ylike manie,
Engendred of humours melancolike,
Beforne his hed in his celle fantastike.
And shortly turned was all up so doun
Both habit and eke dispositioun
Of him, this woful lover Dan Arcite.
What shuld I all day of his wo endite?
Whan he endured had a yere or two
This cruel torment, and this peine and wo,

At Thebes, in his contree, as I said,
Upon a night in slepe as he him laid,
Him thought how that the winged god Mercury
Beforne him stood, and bad him be mery.
His slepy yerde in hond he bare upright;
An hat he wered upon his heres bright:
Arraied was this god, (as he toke kepe,)
As he was whan that Argus toke his slepe,
And said him thus: To Athenes shalt thou wende,
Ther is thee shapen of thy wo an ende.
And with that word Arcite awoke and stert.
Now trewely how sore that ever me smert,
Quod he, to Athenes right now wol I fare;
Ne for no drede of deth shall I not spare
To se my lady, that I love and serve;
In hire presence I rekke not to sterve.
And with that word he caught a gret mirrour,
And saw that changed was all his colour,
And saw his visage all in another kind;
And right anon it ran him in his mind,
That sith his face was so disfigured
Of maladie, the which he had endured,
He might wel, if that he bare him lowe,
Live in Athenes evermore unknowe,
And sen his lady wel nigh day by day.
And right anon he changed his aray,
And clad him as a poure labourer;
And all alone (save only a squier,
That knew his privitie and all his cas,
Which was disguised pourely as he was,)
To Athenes is he gone the nexte way.
And to the court he went upon a day,
And at the gate he proffered his service,
To drugge and draw what so men wold devise.
And shortly of this matere for to sayn,
He fell in office with a chamberlain,
The which that dwelling was with Emelie;
For he was wise, and coude sone espie
Of every servent which that served hire:
Wel coud he hewen wood, and water bere,
For he was yonge and mighty for the nones,
And thereto he was strong and big of bones
To done that any wight can him devise.
A yere or two he was in this service,
Page of the chambre of Emelie the bright,
And Philostrate he sayde that he hight.

But half so wel beloved man as he
Ne was ther never in court of his degre.
He was so gentil of conditioun,
That thurghout all the court was his renoun.
They sayden that it were a charite
That Theseus wold enhaunse his degre,
And putten him in a worshipful service,
Ther as he might his vertues exercise.
And thus, within a while, his name is spronge,
Both of his dedes, and of his good tonge,
That Theseus had taken him so ner,
That of his chambre he made him squier,
And gave him gold to mainteine his degre;
And eke men brought him out of his contre
Fro yere to yere ful prively his rent;
But honestly and sleighly he it spent,
That no man wondred how that he it hadde.
And thre yere in this wise his lif he ladde,
And bare him so in pees and eke in werre,
Ther n'as no man that Theseus hath derre.
And in this blisse let I now Arcite,
And speke I wol of Palamon a lite.

In derkenesse and horrible and strong prison
This seven yere hath sitten Palamon,
Forpined, what for love and for distresse.
Who feleth double sorwe and hevinesse
But Palamon? that love distraineth so,
That wood out of his wit he goth for wo,
And eke therto he is a prisonere
Perpetuell, not only for a yere.

Who coude rime in English properly
His martirdom? forsoth it am not I;
Therfore I passe as lightly as I may.
It fel that in the seventh yere, in May,
The thridde night, (as olde bokes sayn,
That all this storie tellen more plain,)
Were it by aventure or destinee,
(As when a thing is shapen, it shal be)
That sone after the midnight, Palamon,
By helping of a frend, brake his prison,
And fleeth the cite faste as he may go,
For he had yeven drinke his gayler so,
Of a clarre, made of a certain wine,
With narcotikes and opie of Thebes fine,
That all the night, though that men wold him shake,
The gailer slept, he mighte not awake;

And thus he fleeth as faste as ever he may.
The night was short, and faste by the day,
That nedes cost he moste himselven hide,
And to a grove faste ther beside,
With dredful foot then stalketh Palamon,
For shortly this was his opinion,
That in that grove he wold him hide all day,
And in the night than wold he take his way
To Thebes ward, his frendes for to preie
On Theseus to helpen him werreie:
And shortly, eyther he wold lese his lif,
Or winnen Emelie unto his wif.
This is the effect, and his entente plein.
Now wol I turnen to Arcite agein,
That litel wist how neighe was his care,
Till that Fortune had brought him in the snare.
The besy larke, the messager of day,
Salewith in hire song the morwe gray,
And firy Phebus riseth up so bright,
That all the orient laugheth of the sight;
And with his stremes drieth in the greves
The silver dropes hanging in the leves.
And Arcite, that is in the court real
With Theseus the squier principal,
Is risen, and loketh on the mery day;
And for to don his observance to May.
Remembring on the point of his desire,
He on his courser, sterting as the fire,
Is ridden to the feldes him to pley,
Out of the court, were it a mile or twey,
And to the grove, of which that I you told,
By aventure, his way he gan to hold,
To maken him a gerlond of the greves,
Were it of woodbind or of hauthorn leves,
And loud he song agen the sonne shene.
O Maye, with all thy floures and thy grene,
Right welcome be thou, faire fresshe May,
I hope that I some grene here getten may.
And from his courser, with a lusty herte,
Into the grove ful hastily he sterte,
And in a path he romed up and doun.
Ther, as by aventure this Palamon
Was in a bush, that no man might him se,
For sore afered of his deth was he:
Nothing ne knew he that it was Arcite,
God wot he wold have trowed it ful lite.

But soth is said, gon sithen are many yeres,
That feld hath eyen, and wood hath eres,
It is ful faire a man to bere him even,
For al day meten men at unset steven.
Ful litel wote Arcite of his felaw,
That was so neigh to herken of his saw;
For in the bush he sitteth now ful still.
Whan that Arcite had romed all his fill,
And songen all the roundel lustily,
Into a studie he fell sodenly,
As don these lovers in hir queinte geres,
Now in the crop, and now down in the breres;
Now up, now doun, as boket in a well.
Right as the Friday, sothly for to tell,
Now shineth it, and now it raineth fast;
Right so can gery Venus overcast
The hertes of hire folk, right as hire day
Is gerfull, right so changeth she aray;
Selde is the Friday all the weke ylike.
Whan Arcite hadde ysonge, he gan to sike,
And set him doun withouten any more:
Alas! quod he, the day that I was bore!
How longe, Juno, thurgh thy crueltee,
Wilt thou werreien Thebes the citee?
Alas! ybrought is to confusion
The blood real of Cadme and Amphion:
Of Cadmus, which that was the firste man
That Thebes built, or firste the toun began,
And of the citee firste was crouned king.
Of his linage am I, and his ofspring
By veray line, as of the stok real:
And now I am so caitif and so thral,
That he that is my mortal enemy
I serve him as his squier pourely.
And yet doth Juno me wel more shame;
For I dare not beknowe min owen name,
But ther, as I was wont to highte Arcite,
Now highte I Philostrat not worth a mite:
Alas! thou fell Mars; alas! thou Juno,
Thus hath your ire our linage all fordo,
Save only me, and wretched Palamon,
That Theseus martireth in prison;
And over all this, to slen me utterly,
Love hath his firy dart so brenningly
Ysticked thurgh my trewe careful hert,
That shapen was my deth erst than my shert.

Ye slen me with your eyen, Emelie;
Ye ben the cause wherfore that I die.
Of all the remenant of min other care
Ne set I not the mountance of a tare,
So that I coud don ought to your plesance.
And with that word he fell doun in a trance
A longe time, and afterward up sterte.
This Palamon that thought thurghout his herte
He felt a colde swerd sodenly glide,
For ire he quoke, no lenger wolde he hide:
And whan that he had herd Arcites tale,
As he were wood, with face ded and pale,
He sterte him up out of the bushes thikke,
And sayde, False Arcite, false traitour wicke,
Now art thou hent, that lovest my lady so;
For whom that I have all this peine and wo,
And art my blood, and to my conseil sworn,
As I ful oft have told thee herebefore:
And hast bejaped here Duk Theseus,
And falsely changed hast thy name thus;
I wol be ded, or elles thou shalt die:
Thou shalt not love my lady Emelie,
But I wol love hire only and no mo,
For I am Palamon, thy mortal fo.
And though that I no wepen have in this place,
But out of prison am astert by grace,
I drede nought that eyther thou shalt die,
Or thou ne shalt nat loven Emelie:
Chese which thou wilt, for thou shalt not asterte.
This Arcite tho, with ful dispitous herte,
Whan he him knew, and had his tale herd,
As fers as a leon, pulled out a swerd,
And sayde thus; By God, that sitteth above,
N'ere it that thou art sicke, and wood for love,
And eke that thou no wepen hast in this place,
Thou shuldest never out this grove pace,
That thou ne shuldest dien of min hond;
For I defie the suretee and the bond
Which that thou saist that I have made to thee.
What! veray fool, thinke wel that love is free
And I wol love her maugre all thy might:
But for thou art a worthy gentil knight,
And wilnest to darraine hire by bataille,
Have here my trouth, to morwe I will not faille,
Withouten weting of any other wight,
That here I wol be founden as a knight.

And bringen harneis right ynough for thee,
And chese the beste, and leve the werste for me:
And mete and drinke this night wol I bring
Ynough for thee, and cloathes for thy bedding;
And if so be that thou my lady win,
And sle me in this wode ther I am in,
Thou maist well have thy lady as for me.
This Palamon answered, I grant it thee.
And thus they ben departed till a morwe,
When eche of hem hath laid his faith to borwe.
O Cupide, out of alle charitee!
O regne, that wolt no felaw have with thee!
Ful soth is sayde, that love ne lordship
Wol nat, his thankes, have no felawship.
Wel finden that Arcite and Palamon.
Arcite is ridden anone unto the toun,
And on the morwe or it were day light,
Ful prively two harneis hath he dight,
Both suffisant and mete to darreine
The bataille in the field betwix hem tweine;
And on his hors, alone as he was borne,
He carieth all this harneis him beforne;
And the grove, at time and place ysette,
That Arcite and this Palamon ben mette.
Tho changen gan the colour in hir face,
Right as the hunter in the regne of Trace,
That stondeth at a gappe, with a spere,
Whan hunted is the lion or the bere,
And hereth him come rushing in the greves,
And breking bothe the boughes and the leves,
And thinketh, here cometh my mortal enemy,
Withouten faile he must be ded or I:
For eyther I mote slain him at the gappe,
Or he mote slen me, if that me mishappe.
So ferden they, in changing of hir hewe,
As fer as eyther of hem other knewe.
Ther n'as no good day, ne no saluing
But streit withouten wordes rehersing
Everich of hem halpe to armen other
As frendly as he were his owen brother;
And, after that, with sharpe speres strong
They foineden eche at other wonder long.
Thou mightest wenen, that this Palamon
In his fighting were a wood leon,
And as a cruel tigre was Arcite:
As wild bores gan they togeder smite,

That frothen white as fome for ire wood;
Up to the ancle fought they in hir blood;
And in this wise I let hem fighting dwelle,
As forth I wol of Theseus you telle.
The Destinee, ministre general,
That executeth in the world over al
The purveiance that God hath sen beforne,
So strong it is, that though the world hath sworne
The contrary of thing by ya or nay,
Yet sometime it shall fallen on a day
That falleth nat efte in a thousand yere:
For certainly our appetites here,
Be it of werre, or pees, or hate, or love,
All is this ruled by the sight above.
This mene I now by mighty Theseus,
That for to hunten is so desirous,
And namely at the gret hart in May,
That in his bed ther daweth him no day,
That he n'is clad, and redy for to ride
With hunte and horne, and houndes him beside;
For in his hunting hath he swiche delite,
That it is all his joye and appetite,
To ben himself the grete harts bane;
For after Mars he serveth now Diane.
Clere was the day, as I have told or this,
And Theseus, with alle joye and blis,
With his Ipolitia, the fayre quene,
And Emelie, yclothed all in grene,
On hunting ben thy ridden really,
And to the grove, that stood ther faste by,
In which ther was an hart, as men him told,
Duk Theseus the streite way hath hold,
And to the launde he rideth him ful right,
Ther was the hart ywont to have his flight,
And over a brooke, and so forth on his wey.
This duk wol have a cours at him or twey,
With houndes, swiche as him lust to commaunde.
And when this duk was comen to the launde,
Under the sonne he loked, and anon
He was ware of Arcite and Palamon,
That foughten breme, as it were bolles two;
The brighte swerdes wenten to and fro
So hidously, that with the leste stroke
It semed that it wold felle an oke:
But what they weren nothing he ne wote.
This duk his courser with his sporres smote,

And at a stert he was betwix hem two,
And pulled out a swerde, and cried, Ho!
No more, up peine of lesing of your hed;
By mighty Mars, he shall anon be ded
That smiteth any stroke that I may sen!
But telleth me what mistere men ye ben,
That ben so hardy for to fighten here
Withouten any juge or other officere,
As though it were in listes really?
This Palamon answered hastily,
And saide; Sire, what nedeth wordes mo?
We have the death deserved bothe two;
Two woful wretches ben we, two caitives,
That ben accombred of our owen lives;
And, as thou art a rightful lord and juge,
Ne yeve us neyther mercie ne refuge;
But sle me first for seinte charitee,
But sle my felaw eke as wel as me:
Or sle him first, for though thou know it lite,
This is thy mortal fo, this is Arcite,
That fro thy lond is banished on his hed,
For which he hath deserved to be ded;
For this is he that came unto thy gate,
And sayde that he highte Philostrate.
Thus hath he japed thee full many a yere,
And thou hast maked him thy chief squiere:
And this is he that loveth Emelie.
For sith the day is come that I shal die,
I make plainly my confession;
That I am thilke woful Palamon,
That hath thy prison broken wilfully;
I am thy mortal fo, and it am I
That loveth so hot Emelie the bright,
That I wold dien present in hire sight;
Therfore I axe deth and my jewise,
But sle my felaw in the same wise,
For both we have deserved to be slain.
This worthy duk answred anon again,
And sayd, This is a short conclusion,
Your owen mouth, by your confession,
Hath damned you, and I wol it recorde.
It nedeth not to pine you with the corde:
Ye shul be ded, by mighty Mars the rede.
The quene anon for veray womanhede
Gan for to wepe, and so did Emelie,
And all the ladies in the compagnie.

Gret pite was it, as it thought hem alle,
That ever swiche a chance shulde befalle,
For gentil men they were of gret estat,
And nothing but for love was this debat;
And sawe hir blody woundes wide and sore,
And alle criden bothe lesse and more,
Have mercie, lord, upon us wimmen alle,
And on hir bare knees adoun they falle,
And wold have kist his feet ther as he stood,
Till at the last, aslaked was his mood,
(For pitee renneth sone in gentil herte,)
And though he first for ire quoke and sterte,
He hath considered shortly in a clause,
The trespas of hem both, and eke the cause;
And although that his ire hir gilt accused,
Yet in his reson he hem both excused:
As thus; he thought wel that every man
Wol helpe himself in love, if that he can,
And eke deliver himself out of prison;
And eke his herte had compassion
Of wimmen, for they wepten ever in on,
And in his gentil herte he thoughte anon,
And soft unto himself he sayed, Fie
Upon a lord that wol have no mercie,
But be a leon both in word and dede,
To hem that ben in repentance and drede,
As wel as to a proud dispitous man,
That wol mainteinen that he first began.
That lord hath litel of discretion,
That in swiche cas can no division,
But weigheth pride and humblesse after on.
And shortly, when his ire is thus agon,
He gan to loken up with eyen light,
And spake these same wordes all on hight:
The god of Love, a *benedicite!*
How mighty, and how gret a lord is he!
Again his might ther gainen non obstacles,
He may be cleped a god for his miracles:
For he can maken at his owen gise
Of everich herte, as that him list devise.
Lo! here this Arcite, and this Palamon,
That quitely weren out of my prison,
And might have lived in Thebes really,
And weten I am hir mortal enemy,
And that hir deth lith in my might also,
And yet hath love maugre hir eyen two,

Ybrought hem hither bothe for to die.
Now loketh, is not this an heigh folie?
Who may ben a fool, but if he love?
Behold, for Goddes sake, that sitteth above,
Se how they blede! be they not wel araied?
Thus hath hir lord, the god of Love, hem paied
Hir wages and hir fees for hir service,
And yet they wenen for to be ful wise
That serven Love, for ought that may befalle.
And yet is this the beste game of alle,
That she, for whom they have this jolite,
Con hem therfore as mochel thank as me.
She wot no more of alle this hote fare,
By God, than wot a cuckow or an hare.
But alle mote ben assaied hote or cold;
A man mot ben a fool, other yonge or old;
I wot it by myself ful yore agon;
For in my time a servant was I on:
And therefore sith I know of loves peine,
And wote how sore it can a man destreine;
As he that oft hath been caught in his las,
I you foryeve all holly this trespas,
At request of the quene, that kneleth here,
And eke of Emelie, my suster dere,
And ye shul both anon unto me swere
That never mo ye shul my contree dere,
Ne maken werre upon me night ne day,
But ben my frendes in alle that ye may.
I you foryeve this trespas every del.
And they him sware his axing fayr and wel;
And him of lordship and of mercie praid,
And he hem granted grace, and thus he said:
To speke of real linage and richesse,
Though that she were a quene or a princesse,
Eche of you bothe is worthy, douteles,
To wedden whan time is, but natheles
I speke as for my suster Emelie,
For whom ye have this strif and jalousie,
Ye wot yourself, she may not wedden two
At ones, though ye fighten evermo;
But on of you, al be him loth or lefe,
He mot gon pipen in an ivy lefe;
This is to say, she may not have you bothe,
Al be ye never so jalous, ne so wrothe:
And forthy I you put in this degree,
That eche of you shall have his destinee

As him is shape, and herkneth in what wise;
Lo here your ende, of that I shal devise,
My will is this, for plat conclusion,
Withouten any replication:
If that you liketh, take it for the beste,
That everich of you shal gon wher him lest,
Freely, withouten raunson or dangere;
And this day fifty wekes, ferre ne nere,
Everich of you shal bring an hundred knightes,
Armed for the listes up at all rightes,
Alle redy to darrein hire by bataille.
And this behete I you withouten faille,
Upon my trouth, and as I am a knight,
That whether of you bothe hath that might,
This is to sayn, that whether he or thou
May with his hundred, as I spake of now,
Sle his contrary, or out of listes drive,
Him shall I yeven Emelie to wive,
To whom that fortune yeveth so fayr a grace.
The listes shal I maken in this place;
And God so wisly on my soule rewe,
As I shal even juge ben, and trewe.
Ye shal non other ende with me maken,
That on of you ne shall be ded or taken;
And if you thinketh this is wel ysaid,
Saith your avis, and holdeth you apaid.
This is your ende, and your conclusion.
Who loketh lightly now but Palamon?
Who springeth up for joye but Arcite?
Who coud it tell, or who coud it endite,
The joye that is maked in the place,
Whan Theseus hath don so fayre a grace?
But doun on knees went every manere wight,
And thanked him with all hir hertes might,
And namely these Thebanes often sith.
And thus with good hope and with herte blith
They taken hir leve, and homeward gan they ride
To Thebes with his olde walles wide.
I trowe men wolde deme it negligence
If I foryete to tellen the dispence
Of Theseus, that goth so besily
To maken up the listes really,
That swiche a noble theatre as it was
I dare wel sayn in alle this world ther n'as.
The circuite a mile was aboute,
Walled of stone, and diched all withoute;

Round was the shape, in manere of a compas,
Ful of degrees, the hight of sixty pas,
That, whan a man was set on o degree,
He letted not his felaw for to see.
Estward ther stood a gate of marbel white,
Westward right swiche another in the opposite;
And shortly to concluden, swiche a place
Was never in erth, in so litel a space:
For in the lond ther n'as no craftes man
That geometrie or arsemetrike can,
Ne portreiour, ne kerver of images,
That Theseus ne yaf him mete and wages,
The theatre for to maken and devise.
And for to don his rite and sacrifice,
He estward hath upon the gate above,
In worship of Venus, goddesse of Love,
Don make an auter, and an oratorie;
And westward, in the minde and in memorie
Of Mars, he maked hath right swich another,
That coste largely of gold a fother:
And northward, in a touret on the wall,
Of alabastre white, and red corall,
An oratorie, riche for to see,
In worship of Diane of chastitee,
Hath Theseus don wrought in noble wise.
But yet had I foryetten to devise
The noble kerving, and the portreitures,
The shape, the contenance, of the figures
That weren in these oratories three.
First, in the temple of Venus, maist thou see,
Wrought on the wall, ful pitous to beholde,
The broken slepes, and the sikes cold,
The sacred teres, and the waimentinges,
The firy strokes of the desiringes,
That Loves servantes in this lif enduren,
The othes that hir covenants assuren.
Plesance and Hope, Desire, Foolhardinesse,
Beaute and Youth, Baudrie and Richesse,
Charmes and Force, Lesinges and Flaterie,
Dispence, Besinesse, and Jalousie,
That wered of yelwe goldes a gerlond,
And hadde a cuckow sitting on hire hond;
Festes, instruments, and caroles, and dances,
Lust and array, and all the circumstances
Of Love, which that I reken, and reken shall,
By ordre weren peinted on the wall,

And mo than I can make of mention:
For sothly all the mount of Citheron,
Ther Venus hath hire principal dwelling,
Was shewed on the wall in purtreying,
With all the gardin, and the lustinesse:
Nought was foryetten the porter Idlenesse,
Ne Narcissus the fayrr, of yore agone,
Ne yet the folie of King Salomon,
Ne yet the grete strengthe of Hercules.
The enchantment of Medea and Circes,
Ne of Turnus the hardy fiers corage,
The riche Cresus, caitif in servage.
Thus may ye seen, that wisdom ne richesse,
Beaute ne sleighte, strengthe ne hardinesse,
Ne may with Venus holden champartie;
For as hire liste, the world may she gie.
Lo, all these folk so caught were in hire las,
Til they for wo ful often said, Alas!
Sufficeth here ensamples on or two,
And yet I coud reken a thousand mo.
The statue of Venus, glorious for to see,
Was naked fleting in the large see,
And, fro the navel doun, all covered was
With wawes grene, and bright as any glas:
A citole in hire right hand hadde she,
And on hire hed, ful semely for to see,
A rose gerlond fresh, and wel smelling;
Above hire hed, hire doves fleckering;
Before hire stood hire sone Cupido;
Upon his shoulders winges had he two,
And blind he was, as it is often sene;
A bow he bare, and arwes bright and kene.
Why shuld I not as wel eke tell you all
The purtreiture that was upon the wall,
Within the temple of mighty Mars the rede?
All peinted was the wall in length and brede,
Like to the estres of the grisly place
That highte the gret temple of Mars in Trace:
In thilke colde and frosty region,
Ther as Mars hath his sovereine mansion.
First, on the wall was peinted a forest,
In which ther wonneth nyther man ne best,
With knotty knarry barrien trees old,
Of stubbes sharpe, and hidous to behold,
In which ther ran a romble and a swough,
As though a storme shuld bresten every bough;

And dounward from an hill, under a bent,
Ther stood the temple of Mars armipotent,
Wrought all of burned stele, of which the entree
Was longe and streite, and ghastly for to see;
And thereout came a rage and swiche a vise,
That it made all the gates for to rise.
The northern light in at the dore shone,
For window on the wall ne was ther none,
Thurgh which men mighten any light discerne.
The dore was all of athamant eterne,
Yclenched overthwart and endelong,
With yren tough, and for to make it strong,
Every piler, the temple to sustene,
Was tonne-gret, of yren bright and shene.
Ther saw I first the derk imagining
Of Felonie, and alle the compassing;
The cruel Ire, red as any glede;
The Pikepurse, and eke the pale Drede;
The Smiler, with the knife under the cloke;
The shepen brenning with the blake smoke;
The Treson of the mordring in the bedde;
The open Werre, with woundes all bebledde,
Conteke with blody knif, and sharp menace;
All full of chirking was that sorry place.
The sleer of himself yet saw I there,
His herte blood hath bathed all his here:
The naile ydriven in the shode on hight;
The cold Deth, with mouth gaping upright.
Amiddes of the temple sate Mischance,
With discomfort and sory countenance;
Yet saw I Woodnesse laughing in his rage,
Armed Complaint, Outhees, and fiers Outrage;
The carraine in the bush, with throte ycorven;
A thousand slain, and not of qualme ystorven;
The tirant with the prey by force yraft;
The toun destroied, ther was nothing laft;
Yet saw I brent the shippes hoppesteres;
The hunte ystrangled with the wilde beres;
The sow freting the child right in the cradel;
The coke yscalded for all his long ladel:
Nought was foryete by the infortune of Marte,
The carter overridden with his carte,
Under the wheel ful low he lay a doun.
Ther were also of Martes division,
The armerer, and the bowyer, and the smith,
That forgeth sharp swerdes on the stith;

And all above, depeinted in a tour,
Saw I a Conquest, sitting in great honour,
With thilke sharp swerd over his hed
Yhanging by a subtil twined thred.
Depeinted was the slaughter of Julius,
Of gret Nero, and of Antonius:
All be that thilke time they were unborne,
Yet was hir deth depeinted ther beforne;
By menacing of Mars, right by figure,
So was it shewed in that portreiture,
As is depeinted in the cercles above,
Who shal be slaine, or elles ded for love.
Sufficeth on ensample in stories olde;
I may not reken hem alle though I wolde.
The statue of Mars upon a carte stood,
Armed, and loked grim, as he were wood;
And over his hed ther shinen two figures
Of sterres that ben cleped in scriptures,
That on Puella, that other Rubeus.
This god of Armes was araied thus:
A wolf ther stood beforne him at his fete,
With eyen red, and of a man he ete.
With subtil pensill peinted was this storie,
In redouting of Mars and of his glorie.
Now to the temple of Diane the chaste,
As shortly as I can, I wol me haste,
To tellen you of the descriptioun,
Depeinted by the walles up and doun,
Of hunting and of shamefast chastitee.
Ther saw I how woful Calistope,
Whan that Diane agreved was with here,
Was turned from a woman til a bere,
And after was she made the lodesterre.
Thus was it peinted, I can say no ferre;
Hire sone is eke a sterre, as men may see.
There saw I Danè yturned til a tree;
I mene not hire the goddesse Diane,
But Peneus daughter, which that highte Danè.
Ther saw I Atteon, an hart ymaked,
For vengeance that he saw Diane all naked:
I saw how that his houndes have him caught,
And freten him, for that they knew him naught.
Yet peinted was a litel forthermore,
How Athalante hunted the wilde bore;
And Meleagre, and many another mo,
For which Diane wrought hem care and wo.

Ther saw I many another wonder storie,
The which me liste not drawen to memorie.
This goddesse on an hart ful heye sete,
With smale houndes all about hire fete,
And undernethe hire fete she hadde a mone,
Wexing it was, and shuld wanen sone.
In gaudy grene hire statue clothed was,
With bow in hond, and arwes in a cas;
Hire eyen cast she ful low adoun,
Ther Pluto hath his derke regioun.
A woman travailling was hire beforne,
But for hire child so longe was unborne,
Full pitously Lucina gan she call,
And sayed; Helpe, for thou mayest beste of all.
Wel coude he peinten lifly that it wrought,
With many a florein he the hewes bought.
Now ben these listes made, and Theseus,
That at his gret cost arraied thus
The temples, and the theatre everidel,
Whan it was don, him liked wonder wel.
But stint I wol of Theseus a lite,
And speke of Palamon and of Arcite.
The day approcheth of hir returning,
That everich shuld an hundred knightes bring
The bataille to darreine, as I you told;
And til Athenes hir covenant for to hold,
Hath everich of hem brought an hundred knightes
Wel armed for the werre at alle rightes;
And sikerly ther trowed many a man
That never sithen that the world began,
As for to speke of knighthood of hir hond,
As fer as God hath maked see and lond;
N'as of so fewe so noble a compagnie.
For every wight that loved chivalrie,
And wold his thankes han a passant name,
Hath praied that he might ben of that game,
And wel was him that therto chosen was,
For if ther fell to morwe such a cas,
Ye knowen wel that every lusty knight
That loveth *par amour*, and hath his might,
Were it in Englelond or elleswher,
They wold hir thankes willen to be ther.
To fight for a lady, a *benedicite*,
It were a lusty sight for to se.
And right so ferden they with Palamon,
With him there wenten knightes many on;

Som wol ben armed in an habergeon,
And in a brest-plate, and in a gipon;
And som wol have a pair of plates large,
And som wol have a Pruce sheld or a targe;
Som wol ben armed on his legges wele,
And have an axe, and some a mace of stele:
Ther n'is no newe guise, that it n'as old;
Armed they weren, as I have you told,
Everich after his opinion.
Ther maist thou se coming with Palamon,
Licurge himself, the gret King of Trace;
Black was his berd, and manly was his face;
The cercles of his eyen in his hed
They gloweden betwixen yelwe and red;
And like a griffon loked he about,
With kemped heres on his browes stout;
His limmes gret, his braunes hard and stronge,
His shouldres brode, his armes round and longe:
And as the guise was in his contree,
Ful highe upon a char of gold stood he,
With foure white bolles in the trais.
Instede of a cote armure, on his harneis,
With nayles yelwe, and bright as any gold,
He hadde a bere's skin, cole-blake for old.
His longe here was kempt behind his bak,
As any ravnes fether it shone for blake.
A wreth of gold arm-gret, of huge weight,
Upon his hed, sate full of stones bright,
Of fine rubins and of diamans.
About his char ther wenten white alauns,
Twenty and mo, as gret as any stere
To hunten at the leon, or the dere,
And folwed him, with mosel fast ybound
Colered of gold, and torettes filed round:
An hundred lordes had he in his route,
Armed full wel, with hertes sterne and stoute.
With Arcita, in stories as men finde,
The gret Emetrius, the King of Inde,
Upon a stede bay, trapped in stele,
Covered with cloth of gold, diapred wele,
Came riding like the god of armes, Mars:
His cote armure was of a cloth of Tars,
Couched with perles white, round, and gret;
His sadel was of brent golde new ybete;
A mantelet, upon his shoulders hanging,
Bret-ful of rubies red, as fire sparkling,

His crispe here like ringes was yronne,
And that was yelwe, and glitered as the sonne:
His nose was high, his eyen bright citrin,
His lippes round, his colour was sanguin,
A fewe fraknes in his face yspreint,
Betwixen yelwe and blake somdel ymeint;
And as a leon he his loking caste,
Of five-and-twenty yere his age I caste;
His berd was wel begonnen for to spring,
His vois was as a trompe thondering;
Upon his hed he wered, of laurer grene,
A gerlonde fresshe, and lusty for to sene;
Upon his honde he bare, for his deduit,
An egle tame, as any lily whit;
An hundred lordes had he with him there,
All armed save hir hedes in all hir gere,
Ful richely in alle manere thinges;
For trusteth wel, that erles, dukes, kinges,
Were gathered in this noble compagnie,
For love, and for encrese of chevalrie.
About this king ther ran, on every part,
Ful many a tame leon and leopart.
And in this wise, these lords all and some,
Ben on the Sonday to the citee come
Abouten prime, and in the toun alight.
This Theseus, this duk, this worthy knight,
Whan he had brought hem into his citee,
And inned hem, everich at his degree,
He festeth hem, and doth so gret labour
To easen hem, and don hem all honour,
That yet men wenen that no mannes wit
Of non estat ne coud amenden it.
The minstralcie, the service at the feste
The grete yeftes to the most and leste,
The riche array of Theseus paleis,
Ne who sate first, ne last, upon the deis,
What ladies fayrest ben, or best dauncing,
Or which of hem can carole best or sing,
Ne who most felingly speketh of love,
What haukes sitten on perche above,
What houndes liggen on the floor adoun,
Of all this now I make no mentioun.
But of the effect, that thinketh me the beste,
Now cometh the point, and herkeneth if you lest.
The Sonday nighte, or day began to spring,
Whan Palamon the larke herde sing,

Although it n'ere not day by houres two,
Yet sang the larke, and Palamon right tho
With holy herte, and with an high corage,
He rose, to wenden on his pilgrimage
Unto the blissful Citherea benigne,
I mene Venus, honourable and digne.
And in hire houre he walketh forth a pas
Unto the listes, ther hire temple was,
And doun he kneleth, and with humble chere
And herte sore he sayde, as ye shul here:
Fayrest of fayre! O lady min Venus,
Daughter of Jove, and spouse to Vulcanus,
Thou glader of the mount of Citheron!
For thilke love thou haddest to Adon,
Have pitee on my bitter teres smerte,
And take myn humble prair at thin herte.
Alas! I ne have no langage to tell
The effecte, ne the torment of min hell;
Min herte may min harmes not bewrey;
I am so confuse that I cannot say:
But mercy, lady bright! that knowest wele
My thought, and seest what harmes that I fele:
Consider all this, and rue upon my sore,
As wisly as I shal for evermore
Emforth my might thy trewe servant be,
And holden werre alway with chastite;
That make I min avow, so ye me helpe,
I kepe nought of armes for to yelpe,
Ne axe I nat to-morwe to have victorie,
Ne renoun in this cas, ne vaine glorie
Of pris of armes, blowen up and doun,
But I wold have fully possessioun
Of Emelie, and die in her servise:
Finde thou the manere how, and in what wise,
I rekke not but it may better be
To have victory of hem, or they of me,
So that I have my lady in min armes;
For though so be that Mars is god of armes,
Your vertue is so grete in heven above,
That, if you liste, I shal wel have my love.
Thy temple wol I worship evermo,
And on thin auter, wher I ride or go
I wol don sacrifice, and fires bete.
And if ye wol not so, my lady swete!
Than pray I you to-morwe with a spere,
That Arcita me thurgh the herte bere;

Thán rekke I not when I have lost my lif
Though that Arcita win hire to his wif.
This is the effecte and ende of my praiere,
Yeve me my love, thou blissful lady dere!
When the orison was don of Palamon,
His sacrifice he did, and that anon.
Ful pitously, with alle circumstances,
All tell I not as now his observances.
But at the last the statue of Venus shoke,
And made a signe, whereby that he toke,
That his praiere accepted was that day;
For though the signe shewed a delay,
Yet wist he wel, that granted was his bone,
And with glad herte he went him home ful sone.
The thirdde hour inequal that Palamon
Began to Venus temple for to gon,
Up rose the sonne, and up rose Emelie,
And to the temple of Diane gan hie.
Hire maydens, that she thider with hire ladde
Ful redily with hem the fire they hadde,
The encense, the clothes, and the remenant all,
That to the sacrifice longen shall.
The hornes full of mede, as was the gise,
Ther lakked nought to don hire sacrifise.
Smoking the temple, full of clothes fayre,
This Emelie, with herte debonaire
Hire body wesshe with water of a well,
But how she did hire rite I dare not tell;
But it be any thing in generall,
And yet it were a game to heren all;
To him that meneth wel it n'ere no charge,
But it is good a man to ben at large.
Hire bright here kembed was, untressed all;
A coroune of a grene oke ceriall
Upon hire hed was set ful fayre and mete;
Two fires on the auter gan she bete,
And did hire thinges, as men may behold
In Stace of Thebes, and these bokes old.
Whan kendled was the fire, with pitous chere,
Unto Diane she spake, as ye may here:
O chaste goddesse of the wodes grene,
To whom both heven, and erth, and see, is sene,
Quene of the regne of Pluto, derke and lowe,
Goddesse of maidens that myn herte hast knowe
Ful many a yere, and wost what I desire,
As kepe me fro thy vengeance and thin ire,

That Atteon aboughte cruelly!
Chast goddesse! wel wotest thou that I
Desire to ben a mayden all my lif,
Ne never wol I be no love ne wif:
I am (thou wost) yet of thy compagnie,
A mayde, and love hunting and venerie,
And for to walken in the wodes wilde,
And not to ben a wife, and be with childe:
Nought wol I knowen compagnie of man;
Now helpe me, lady, sith you may and can;
For tho three formes that thou hast in thee:
And Palamon, that hath swiche love to me,
And eke Arcite, that loveth me so sore,
This grace I praie thee, withouten more,
As sende love and pees betwix hem two,
And fro me turne away hir hertes so,
That all hir hot love and hir desire,
And all hir besy torment, and hir fire
Be queinte, or torned in another place.
And if so be thou wolt not do me grace,
Or if my destinee be shapen so,
That I shal nedes have on of hem two,
As sende me hiin that most desireth me.
Beholde, goddesse of clene chastite,
The bitter teres that on my chekes fall,
Sin thou art a mayde, and keper of us all,
My maydenhede thou kepe, and well conserve,
And while I live a mayde I wol thee serve.
The fires brenne upon the auter clere,
While Emelie was thus in hire praiere,
But sodenly she saw a sighte queinte;
For right anon on of the fires queinte
And quiked again, and after that, anon
That other fire was queinte, and all agon;
And as it queinte, it made a whisteling,
As don these brondes wet in hir brenning;
And at the brondes ende outfan anon,
As it were blody dropes many on;
For which, so sore agast was Emelie,
That she was well neigh mad, and gan to crie;
For she ne wiste what it signified,
But only for the fere thus she cried,
And wept, that it was pitee for to here.
And therewithall Diane gan appere
With bow in hond, right as an hunteresse,
And sayde, Doughter, stint thin hevinesse.

Among the goddes highe it is affermed,
And by eterne word written and confermed,
Thou shalt be wedded unto on of tho
That han for thee so mochel care and wo,
But unto which of hem I may not tell.
Farewel! for here I may no longer dwell:
The fires, which that on min auter brenne,
Shal thee declaren, er that thou go henne,
Thin aventure of love, as in this case.
And, with that word, the arwes in the case
Of the goddesse clatteren fast and ring,
And forth she went, and made a vanishing;
For which this Emelie astonied was,
And sayde, What amounteth this, alas!
I put me in thy protection,
Diane, and under thy disposition.
And home she goth anon the nexte way.
This is the effecte; there n'is no more to say.
The next houre of Mars folwing this,
Arcite unto the temple walked is
Of fierce Mars to don his sacrifise,
With all the rites of his payen wise:
With pitous herte and high devotion,
Right thus to Mars he sayde his orison:
O stronge God, that in the regnes cold
Of Trace honoured art, and lord yhold,
And hast in every regne, and every lond
Of armes, all the bridel in thin hond,
And hem fortunest as thee list devise,
Accept of me my pitous sacrifise!
If so be that my youthe may deserve,
And that my might be worthy for to serve
Thy godhed, that I may ben on of thine;
Than praie I thee to rewe upon my pine;
For thilke peine, and thilke hot fire,
In which thou whilom brendest for desire,
Whanne that thou usedest the beautee
Of fayre yonge Venus fresshe and free,
And haddest hire in armes at thy wille;
Although thee ones on a time misfille,
Whan Vulcanus had caught thee in his las,
And fond thee ligging by his wif, alas!
For thilke sorwe that was tho in thin herte,
Have reuthe as wel upon my peines smerte.
I am yonge and unkonning as thou wost,
And, as I trow, with love offended most,

That ever was ony lives creature;
For she that doth me all this wo endure
Ne recceth never whether I sinke or flete;
And wel I wote, or she me mercy hete,
I moste with strengthe win hire in the place:
And wel I wote, withouten helpe or grace
Of thee, ne may my strengthe not availle:
Than help me, Lord, to-morwe in my bataille,
For thilke fire that whilom brenned thee,
As wel as that this fire now brenneth me,
And do, that I to-morwe may han victorie;
Min be the travaille, and thin be the glorie.
Thy soveraine temple wol I most honouren
Of ony place, and alway most labouren
In thy plesance, and in thy craftes strong,
And in thy temple I wol my baner hong,
And all the armes of my compagnie,
And evermore, until that day I die,
Eterne fire I wol beforne thee find;
And eke to this avow I wol me bind.
My berd, my here, that hangeth long adoun,
That never yet felt non offensioun,
Of rasour ne of shere, I wol thee yeve,
And ben thy trewe servant while I live.
Now, Lord, have reuth upon my sorwes sore,
Yeve me the victorie, I axe thee no more.
The praier stint of Arcita the stronge,
The ringes on the temple dore that honge,
And eke the dores, clattereden ful fast,
Of which Arcita somwhat him agast.
The fires brent upon the auter bright,
That it gan all the temple for to light,
A swete smel anon the ground up yaf,
And Arcita anon his hond up haf,
And more enscense into the fire he cast,
With other rites mo; and, at the last,
The statue of Mars began his hauberke ring,
And with that soun he herd a murmuring
Ful low and dim, that said thus, Victory;
For which he yaf to Mars honour and glorie.
And thus with joye, and hope wel to fare,
Arcite anon unto his inne is fare,
As fayn as foul is of the brighte sonne;
And right anon swiche strif ther is begonne,
For thilke granting in the heven above,
Betwixen Venus, the goddesse of Love,

And Mars, the sterne god armipotent,
That Jupiter was besy it to stent,
Til that the pale Saturnus the Colde,
That knew so many of aventures olde,
Fond in his olde experience and art,
That he ful sone hath plesed every part.
As sooth is sayd, elde hath gret avantage;
In elde is both wisdom and usage:
Men may the old out-renne, but not out-rede.
Saturne anon, to stenten strif and drede,
Albeit that it is again his kind,
Of all this strif he gan a remedy find.
My dere doughter Venus, quod Saturne,
My cours, that hath so wide for to turne,
Hath more power than wot any man.
Min is the drenching in the see so wan,
Min is the prison in the derke cote,
Min is the strangel and hanging by the throte,
The murmure, and the cherles rebelling,
The groyning, and the privy enpoysoning.
I do vengeaunce and pleine correction
While I dwell in the signe of the Leon.
Min is the ruine of the highe halles,
The falling of the toures and of the walles
Upon the minour, or the carpenter;
I slew Samson in shaking the piler.
Min ben also the maladies colde,
The derke tresons and the castes olde:
My loking is the fader of pestilence.
Now wepe no more; I shal do diligence
That Palamon, that is thin owen knight,
Shal have his lady as thou hast him hight.
Thogh Mars shal help his knight yet natheles,
Betwixen you ther mot sometime be pees:
All be ye not of o complexion,
That causeth all day swiche division.
I am thine ayel, redy at thy will;
Wepe now no more, I shall thy lust fulfill.
Now wol I stenten of the goddes above,
Of Mars and of Venus, goddesse of Love,
And tellen you as plainly as I can
The gret effect for which that I began.
Gret was the feste in Athenes thilke day,
And eke the lusty seson of that May,
Made every wight to ben in swiche plesance,
That all that Monday justen they and dance,

And spenden it in Venus highe servise;
But by the cause that they shulden rise
Erly a-morwe, for to seen the sight,
Unto hir reste wenten they at night.
And on the morwe, whan the day gan spring,
Of hors and harneis, noise and clattering,
Ther was in the hostelries all aboute;
And to the paleis rode ther many a route
Of lordes upon stedes and palfreis.
There mayest thou see devising of harneis,
So uncouth, and so riche, and wrought so wele,
Of goldsmithry, of brouding, and of stele;
The sheldes brighte, testeres and trappures,
Gold-hewen helmes, hauberkes, cote armures,
Lordes in parementes, on hir courseres,
Knightes of retenue, and eke squires,
Nailing the speres, and helmes bokeling,
Guiding of sheldes, with lainers lacing;
Ther, as nede is, they weren nothing idel;
The fomy stedes on the golden bridel
Gnawing, and fast the armurers also
With file and hammer priking to and fro;
Yemen on foot, and communes many on
With shorte staves, thicke as they may gon;
Pipes, trompes, nakeres, and clariounes,
That in the battaille blowen blody sounes;
The paleis full of peple up and doun,
Here three, ther ten, holding hir questioun,
Devining of these Theban knightes two.
Som sayden thus, som sayde it shall be so;
Som helden with him with the blacke berd,
Som with the balled, som with the thick herd;
Some saide he loked grim, and wolde fighte,
He hath a sparth of twenty pound of wighte.
Thus was the halle full of divining,
Long after that the sonne gan up spring.
The gret Theseus that of his slepe is waked
With minstralcie and noise that was maked,
Held yet the chambre of his paleis riche,
Til that the Theban knightes bothe yliche
Honoured were, and to the paleis fette.
Duk Theseus is at the window sette,
Araied right as he were a god in trone;
The peple preset thiderward ful sone,
Him for to seen, and don high reverence,
And eke to herken his heste and his sentence.

An heraud on a scaffold made an o,
Til that the noise of the peple was ydo,
And whan he saw the peple of noise al still,
Thus shewed he the mighty dukes will.
The lord hath of his high discretion
Considered that it were destruction
To gentil blood to fighten in the gise
Of mortal bataille now in this emprise;
Wherefore to shapen that they shul not die,
He wol his firste purpos modifie.
No man therefore, up peine of losse of lif,
No maner shot, ne pollax, ne short knif,
Into the listes send, or thider bring,
Ne short swerd to stike with point biting,
No man ne draw, ne bere it by his side,
Ne no man shal unto his felaw ride
But o cours, with a sharpe ygrounden spere;
Foin if him list on foot, himself to were;
And he that is at meschief shal be take,
And not slaine, but be brought unto the stake
That shal ben ordeined on eyther side;
Thider he shal by force, and ther abide;
And if so fall the chevetain be take
On eyther side, or elles sleth his make,
No longer shal the tourneying ylast.
God spede you; goth forth and lay on fast:
With longe swerd and with mase fighteth your fill.
Goth now your way; this is the lordes will.
The vois of the peple touched to the heven,
So loude crieden they with mery steven,
God save swiche a lorde that is so good,
He wilneth no destruction of blood.
Up gon the trompes and the melodie,
And to the listes rit the compagnie
By ordinance, thurghout the cite large,
Hanged with cloth of gold, and not with sarge.
Ful like a lord this noble duk gan ride,
And these two Thebans upon eyther side,
And after rode the Quene and Emelie,
And after that another compagnie,
Of on and other after hir degree;
And thus they passen thurghout the citee,
And to the listes comen they be time;
It n'as not of the day yet fully prime.
Whan set was Theseus ful riche and hie,
Ipolita the quene, and Emelie,

And other ladies in degrees aboute,
Unto the setes preseth all the route.
And westward, thurgh the gates under Mart,
Arcite, and eke the hundred of his part,
With baner red, is entred right anon;
And in the selve moment Palamon
Is, under Venus, estward in the place,
With baner white, and hardy chere and face:
And in al the world, to seken up and doun,
So even without variation
Ther n'ere swiche compagnies never twey;
For ther was non so wise that coude sey,
That any hadde of other avantage
Of worthinesse, ne of estat, ne age;
So even were they chosen for to gesse:
And in two renges fayre they hem dresse.
Whan that hir names red were everich on,
That in her nombre gile were ther non,
Tho were the gates shette, and cried was loude,
Do now your devoir, yonge knightes proude.
The heraudes left hir priking up and doun.
Now ringin trompes loude, and clarioun.
Ther is no more to say, but este and west
In goth the speres sadly in the rest;
In goth the sharpe spore into the side;
Ther see men who can juste and who can ride
Ther shiveren shaftes upon sheldes thicke;
He feleth thurgh the herte-spone the pricke:
Up springen speres, twenty foot on highte;
Out gon the swerdes as the silver brighte:
The helmes they to-hewen and to-shrede;
Out brest the blod with sterne stremes rede:
With mighty maces, the bones they to-breste;
He thurgh the thickest of the throng gan threste:
There stomblen stedes strong, and doun goth all;
He rolleth under foot as doth a ball:
He foineth on his foo with a tronchoun,
And he him hurtleth with his hors adoun:
He thurgh the body is hurt, and sith ytake
Maugre his hed, and brought unto the stake,
As forword was, right ther he must abide;
Another lad is on that other side:
And somtime doth hem Theseus to reste,
Hem to refresh, and drinken if hem lest.
Ful oft a day han thilke Thebanes two
Togeder met and wrought eche other wo:
Unhorsed hath eche other of hem twey.
Ther n'as no tigre in the vale of Galaphey,

Whan that hire whelpe is stole whan it is lite,
So cruel on the hunt as is Arcite
For jalous herte upon this Palamon:
Ne in Belmarie ther n'is so fell leon
That hunted is, or for his hunger wood,
Ne of his prey desireth so the blood,
As Palamon to sleen his foo Arcite:
The jalous strokes on hir helmes bite;
Out renneth blood on both hir sides rede.
Somtime an end there is of every dede;
For, er the sonne unto the reste went,
The strong King Emetrius gan hent
This Palamon, as he fought with Arcite,
And made his swerd depe in his flesh to bite;
And by the force of twenty is he take
Unyolden, and ydrawen to the stake:
And in the rescous of this Palamon
The stronge King Licurge is borne adoun;
And King Emetrius, for all his strengthe,
Is borne out of his sadel a swerdes lengthe,
So hitte him Palamon or he were take:
But all for nought, he was brought to the stake:
His hardy herte might him helpen naught;
He moste abiden whan that he was caught,
By force, and eke by composition.
Who sorweth now but woful Palamon,
That moste no more gon again to fight?
And whan that Theseus had seen that sight,
Unto the folk that foughten thus ech on,
He cried, Ho![*] no more, for it is don.
I wol be true juge, and not partie.
Arcite of Thebes shal have Emelie,
That by his fortune hath hire fayre ywonne.
Anon ther is a noise of peple begonne
For joye of this, so loud and high withall
It seemed that the listes shulden fall.
What can now fayre Venus don above?
What saith she now? What doth this quene of Love?
But wepeth so, for wanting of hire will,
Til that hire teres in the listes fill:
She sayde, I am ashamed doutelees.
Saturnus sayde, Daughter, hold thy pees:
Mars hath his will, his knight hath all his bone,
And, by min hed, thou shalt ben esed sone.

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* "If the King's Majesty say but Ho! or give any other signal, then they who are within the lists, with the constable and marshal, throwing their lances between the appellant and defendant, so part them."—*The Ancient Method of Duels before the King.*

The trompoures, with the loud minstralcie,
The heraudes, that so loude yell and crie,
Ben in hir joye for wele of Dan Arcite.
But herkeneth me, and stenteth noise a lite,
Whiche a miracle ther befell anon.
This fierce Arcite hath of his helme ydon,
And on a courser for to shew his face
He priketh endlong the large place,
Loking upward upon this Emelie,
And she again him cast a frendlich eye,
(For women, as to speken in commune,
They folwen all the favour of Fortune,)
And was all his in chere as his in herte.
Out of the ground a fury infernal sterte,
From Pluto sent, at requeste of Saturne,
For which his hors for fere gan to turne,
And lepte aside, and foundred as he lepe;
And er that Arcite may take any kepe,
He pight him on the pomel of his hed,
That in the place he lay as he were ded,
His breste to-brosten with his sadel bow;
As blake he lay as any cole or crow,
So was the blood yronnen in his face.
Anon he was yborne out of the place,
With herte sore, to Theseus paleis:
Tho was he corven out of his harneis,
And in a bed ybrought ful fayre and blive,
For he was yet in memorie and live,
And alway crying after Emelie.
Duk Theseus, with all his compagnie,
Is comen hom to Athens, his citee,
With alle blisse and gret solempnite.
Al be it that this aventure was falle
He n'olde not discomforten hem alle.
Men sayden eke that Arcite shal not die,
He shal ben heled of his maladie.
And of another thing they were as fayn,
That of hem alle was ther non yslain,
Al were they sore yhurt, and namely on,
That with a spere was thirled his brest bone.
To other woundes, and to broken armes,
Som hadden salves, and some hadden charmes;
And fermacies of herbes, and eke save
They dronken, for they wold hir lives have:
For which this noble duk, as he wel can,
Comforteth and honoureth every man,

And made revel all the longe night
Unto the strange lordes, as was right.
Ne ther n'as holden no discomforting
But as at justes, or a tourneying;
For sothly ther n'as no discomfiture,
For falling n'is not but an aventure:
Ne to be lad by force unto a stake
Unyolden, and with twenty knightes take,
O person all alone, withouten mo,
And haried forth by armes, foot, and too,
And eke his stede driven forth with staves,
With footmen, bothe yemen and eke knaves,
It was aretted him no villanie;
Ther may no man clepen it cowardie.
For which anon Duk Theseus let crie,
To stenten alle rancour and envie,
The gree as wel of o side as of other,
And eyther side ylike, as others brother;
And yave hem giftes after hir degree,
And helde a feste fully dayes three;
And conveyed the kinges worthily
Out of his toun a journee largely;
And home went every man the righte way;
Ther n'as no more but farewel, have good day.
Of this bataille I wol no more endite,
But speke of Palamon and of Arcite.
Swelleth the brest of Arcite, and the sore
Encreseth at his herte more and more.
The clotered blood for any leche-craft
Corrumpeth, and is in his bouke ylaft,
That neyther vine-blood ne ventousing,
Ne drinke of herbes, may ben his helping.
The vertue expulsif, or animal,
Forthilke vertue cleped natural,
Ne may the venime voiden ne expell;
The pipes of his longes gan to swell,
And every lacerte in his brest adoun
Is shent with venime and corruptioun.
Him gaineth neyther for to get his lif
Vomit upward ne dounward laxatif:
All is to-brosten thilke region;
Nature hath now no domination:
And certainly ther nature wol not werche.
Farewel physike; go bere the man to cherche.
This is all and som, that Arcite moste die;
For which he sendeth after Emelie,

And Palamon, that was his cosin dere;
Than sayd he thus, as ye shuln after here:
Nought may the woful spirit in myn herte
Declare o point of all my sorwes smerte
To you, my lady, that I love most;
But I bequethe the service of my gost
To you aboven every creature,
Sin that my lif ne may no lenger dure.
Alas! the wo; alas! the peines strong,
That I for you have suffered, and so long;
Alas! the deth; alas! mine Emelie;
Alas! departing of our compagnie;
Alas! min hertes quene; alas! my wif;
Min hertes ladie! ender of my lif!
What is this world? what axen men to have?
Now with his love, now in his colde grave
Alone withouten any compagnie.
Farewel, my swete! farewel, min Emelie!
And softe take me in your armes twey,
For love of God, and herkeneth what I sey.
I have here with my cosin Palamon
Had strif and rancour many a day agon
For love of you, and for my jalousie;
And Jupiter so wis my soule gie,
To speken of a servant properly,
With alle circumstances trewely,
That is to sayn, trouth, honour, and knighthede,
Wisdom, humblesse, estat, and high kinrede,
Freedom, and all that longeth to that art,
So Jupiter have of my soule part,
As in this world right now ne know I non
So worthy to be loved as Palamon,
That serveth you, and wol don all his lif;
And if that ever ye shal ben a wif,
Foryete not Palamon, the gentil man.
And with that word his speche faille began;
For from his feet up to his brest wos come
The cold of deth, that had him overnome;
And yet moreover in his armes two
The vital strength is lost and all ago;
Only the intellect, withouten more,
That dwelled in his herte sike and sore,
Gan faillen whan the herte felt deth;
Dusked his eyen two, and failled his breth:
But on his ladie yet cast he his eye;
His laste word was, Mercy, Emelie!

His spirit changed hous, and wente ther
As I cam never I cannot tellen wher;
Therefore I stent, I am no divinistre;
Of soules find I not in this registre:
Ne me lust not the opinions to telle
Of hem, though that they written wher they dwelle.
Arcite is cold, ther Mars his soule gie.
Now wol I speken forth of Emelie.
Shright Emelie, and houleth Palamon,
And Theseus his sister toke anon
Swouning, and bare her from the corps away.
What helpeth it to tarien forth the day,
To tellen how she wepe both even and morwe?
For in swiche cas wimmen have swiche sorwe,
Whan that hir hosbonds ben fro hem ago,
That for the more part they sorwen so,
Or elles fallen in swiche maladie,
That atte last certainly they die.
Infinite ben the sorwes and the teres
Of olde folk, and folk of tendre yeres,
In all the toun, for deth of this Theban;
For him ther wepeth bothe child and man:
So gret weping was ther non certain,
Whan Hector was ybrought, all fresh yslain,
To Troie: Alas! the pitee that was there;
Cratching of chekes, rending eke of here.
Why woldest thou be ded, thise women crie,
And haddest gold ynough, and Emelie?
No man might gladen this Duk Theseus,
Saving his olde fader Egeus,
That knew this worldes transmutation,
As he had seen it chaungen up and doun,
Joye after wo, and wo after gladnesse,
And shewed him ensample and likenesse.
Right as ther died never man, (quod he,)
That he ne lived in erth in som degree,
Right so ther lived never man, (he seyd,)
In all this world, that somtime he ne deyd:
This world n'is but a thurghfare, ful of wo,
And we ben pilgrimes, passing to and fro:
Deth is an end of every worldes sore.
And over all this yet said he mochel more,
To this effect, ful wisely to enhort
The peple, that they shuld hem recomfort.
Duk Theseus, with all his besy cure,
He casteth now, wher that the sepulture

Of good Arcite may best ymaked be,
And eke most honourable in his degree;
And at the last he toke conclusion,
That ther as first Arcite and Palamon
Hadden for love the bataille hem betwene,
That in that selve grove, sote and grene,
Ther as he hadde his amorous desires,
His complaint, and for love his hote fires;
He wold make a fire, in which the office
Of funeral he might all accomplise;
And let anon commande to hack and hewe
The okes old, and lay hem on a rew
In culpons, wel arraied for to brenne.
His officers with swifte feet they renne
And ride anon at his commandement.
And after this, this Theseus hath sent
After a bere, and it all overspradde
With cloth of gold, the richest that he hadde;
And of the same suit he cladde Arcite.
Upon his hondes were his gloves white,
Eke on his hed a croune of laurer grene,
And in his hond a swerd ful bright and kene.
He laid him bare the visage on the bere,
Therwith he wept that pitee was to here;
And for the peple shulde seen him alle,
Whan it was day, he brought him to the halle,
That roreth of the crying, and the soun.
Tho came this woful Theban, Palamon,
With flotery berd, and ruggy ashy heres,
In clothes blake, ydropped all with teres,
And (passing over of weping Emelie)
The reufullest of all the compagnie.
And in as much as the service shuld be
The more noble, and riche in his degree,
Duk Theseus let forth three stedes bring,
That trapped were in stele all glittering,
And covered with the armes of Dan Arcite;
And eke upon these stedes, gret and white,
Ther saten folk, of which on bare his sheld,
Another his spere up in his hondes held;
The thridde bare with him his bow Turkeis,
Of brent gold was the cas and the harneis;
And riden forth a pas with sorweful chere
Toward the groue, as ye shal after here.
The noblest of the Grekes that ther were
Upon hir shuldres carrieden the bere,

With slacke pas, and eyen red and wete,
Thurghout the citee, by the maister strete,
That sprad was al with black, and wonder hie,
Right of the same is all the strete ywrie.
Upon the right hand went olde Egeus,
And on the other side, Duk Theseus,
With vessels in hir hond of gold ful fine,
All ful of hony, milk, and blood, and wine;
Eke Palamon, with ful gret compagnie,
And after that came woful Emelie,
With fire in hond, as was that time the gise,
To don the office of funeral service.
High labour and ful gret apparailling
Was at the service of that fire making,
That with his grene top the heaven raught,
And twenty fadom of bred the armes straught;
This is to sain, the boughes were so brode,
Of stre first ther was laied many a lode.
But how the fire was maked up on highte,
And eke the names how the trees highte,
As oke, fir, birch, aspe, alder, holm, poplere,
Wilow, elm, plane, ash, box, chestein, lind, laurere,
Maple, thorn, beche, hasel, ew, whipultre,
How they were feld, shal not be told for me;
Ne how the goddes rannen up and doun,
Disherited of hir habitatioun;
In which they woneden in rest and pees,
Nimphes, Faunes, and Amidriades;
Ne how the bestes, and the birddes alle
Fledden for fere whan the wood gan falle;
Ne how the ground agast was of the light,
That was not wont to see the sonne bright;
Ne how the fire was couched first with stre,
And than with drie stickes cloven a-thre,
And than with grene wood and spicerie,
And than with cloth of gold and with perrie,
And garlonds hanging with ful many a flour,
The mirre, the encense also, with swete odour;
Ne how Arcita lay among all this,
Ne what richesse about his body is;
Ne how that Emelie, as was the gise,
Put in the fire of funeral service;
Ne how she swouned, whan she made the fire,
Ne what she spake, ne what was hire desire;
Ne what jewelles men in the fire caste,
Whan that the fire was gret, and brente fast;

Ne how som cast hir sheld, and som hir spere,
And of hir vestimentes, which they were,
And cuppes full of wine, and milk, and blood,
Into the fire, that brent as it were wood;
Ne how the Grekes, with a huge route,
Three times riden all the fire aboute
Upon the left hond, with a loud shouting,
And thries with hir speres clatering;
And thries how the ladies gan to crie;
Ne how that led was homeward Emelie;
Ne how Arcite is brent to ashen cold;
Ne how the liche-wake was yhold
All thilke night; ne how the Grekes play;
The wake-plaies ne kepe I not to say;
Who wrestled best naked, with oile enoint,
Ne who that bare him best in no disjoint:
I woll not tellen eke how they all gon
Home till Athenes, whan the play is don.
But shortly to the point now wol I wende,
And maken of my longe tale an ende.

By processe, and by lengthe of certain yeres,
All stenten is the mourning and the teres
Of Grekes, by on general assent:
Than semeth me ther was a parlement
At Athenes, upon certain points and cas;
Amonges the which points yspoken was
To have with certain contrees alliance,
And have of Thebanes fully obeisance;
For which this noble Theseus anon
Let senden after gentil Palamon.
Unwist of him what was the cause, and why:
But in his blacke clothes sorwefully
He came at his commandment on hie;
Tho sente Theseus for Emelie.

Whan they were set, and husht was al the place,
And Theseus abiden hath a space,
Or any word came from his wise brest,
His eyen set he ther as was his lest,
And with a sad visage he siked still,
And after that right thus he sayd his will.

The firste Mover of the cause above,
Whan he firste made the fayre chaine of love,
Gret was the effect, and high was his entent;
Well wist he why, and what therof he ment:
For with that fayre chaine of love he bond
The fire, the air, the watre, and the lond,

In certain bondes, that they may not flee:
That same prince and mover eke, quod he,
Hath stablisht, in this wretched world adoun,
Certain of dayes and duration,
To all that are engendred in this place,
Over the which day they ne mow not pace,
Al mow they yet the dayes well abrege.
Ther nedeth non autoritee allege,
For it is preved by experience,
But that me lust declaren my sentence.
Than may men by this ordre well discerne,
That thilke Mover stable is and eterne;
Wel may men knowen, but it be a fool,
That every part deriveth from his hool;
For Nature hath not taken his beginning
Of no partie ne cantel of a thing,
But of a thing that parfit is and stable,
Descending so til it be corrumpable;
And therefore of his wise purveyance
He hath so wel beset his ordinance,
That speces of thinges and progressions
Shullen enduren by successions,
And not eterne, withouten any lie;
This maist thou understand, and seen at eye.
Lo the oke, that hath so long a norishing
Fro the time that it ginneth first to spring,
And hath so long a lif, as ye may see,
Yet at the laste wasted is the tree.
Considereth eke how that the harde stone
Under our feet, on which we trede and gone,
It wasteth, as it lieth by the wey;
The brode river sometime wexeth drey;
The grete tounes see we wane and wende;
Than may ye see that all thing hathe an ende.
Of man and woman see we wel also,
That nedes in on of the termes two,
That is to sayn, in youthe, or elles age,
He mote be ded, the king as shall a page;
Som in his bed, som in the depe see,
Som in the large feld, as ye may see:
Ther helpeth nought, all goth that ilke wey;
Than may I sayn, that alle thing mote dey.
What maketh this but Jupiter the King,
The which is prince and cause of alle thing,
Converting alle unto his propre wille,
From which it is derived, soth to telle?

And here-againes no creature on live
Of no degree availleth for to strive.
Than is it wisdom, as it thinketh me,
To maken vertue of necessite,
And take it wel that we may not eschewe,
And namely that to us all is dewe;
And whoso, grutcheth ought he doth folie,
And rebel is to him that all may gie.
And certainly a man hath most honour
To dien in his excellence and flour,
Whan he is siker of his goode name;
Than hath he don his frend ne him no shame;
And glader ought his frend ben of his deth,
Whan with honour is yolden up his breth,
Than whan his name appalled is for age,
For all foryetten is his vassalage:
Than is it best as for a worthy fame,
To dein whan a man is best of name.
The contrary of all this is wilfulnesse.
Why grutchen we? why have we hevinesse,
That good Arcite, of chivalry the flour,
Departed is, with dutee and honour,
Out of this foule prison of this lif?
Why grutchen here his cosin and his wif
Of his welfare, that loven him so wel?
Can he hem thank? nay, God wot, never a del,
That both his soule and eke himself offend,
And yet they mow her lustres not amend.
What may I conclude of this longe serie,
But after sorwe I rede us to be merie,
And thanken Jupiter of all his grace;
And er that we departen from this place,
I rede that we make of sorwes two
O parfit joye lasting evermo:
And loketh now wher most sorwe is herein,
Ther wol I firste amenden and begin.
Sister, (quod he) this is my full assent,
With all the avis here of my parlement,
That gentil Palamon, your owen knight,
That serveth you with will, and herte, and might,
And ever hath don sin you first him knew,
That ye shall of your grace upon him rew,
And taken him for husbond and for lord:
Lene me your hand, for this is oure accord.
Let see now of your womanly pitee:
He is a kinges brothers sone pardee;

And though he were a poure bachelere,
Sin he hath served you so many a yere,
And had for you so gret adversite,
It moste ben considered, leveth me,
For gentil mercy oweth to passen right.
Than sayed he thus to Palamon the knight;
I trow their nedeth litel sermoning
To maken you assenten to this thing.
Cometh ner, and take your lady by the hond.
Betwixen hem was maked anon the bond
That highte matrimoine or mariage,
By all the conseil of the baronage;
And thus with alle blisse and melodie
Hath Palamon ywedded Emelie;
And God, that all this wide world hath wrought,
Send him his love that hath it dere ybought.
For now is Palamon in alle wele,
Living in blisse, in richesse, and in hele,
And Emilie him loveth so tendrely,
And he hire serveth all so gentilly,
That never was ther no word hem betwene
Of jalousie, ne of non other tene.
Thus endeth Palamon and Emelie;
And God save all this fayre compagnie.

THE

NONNES PREESTES TALE.

A POURE widewe, somdel stoupen in age,
Was whilom dwelling in a narwe cotage
Beside a grove stonding in a dale.
This widewe, which I tell you of my tale,
Sin thilke day that she was last a wif
In patience led a ful simple lif,
For litel was hire catel and hire rente;
By husbondry of swiche as God hire sente
She found hireself and eke hire doughtren two.
Three large sowes had she, and no mo,
Three kine, and eke a sheep that highte Malle;
Ful sooty was hire boure and eke hire halle,
In which she ete many a slender mele;
Of poinant sauce ne knew she never a dele:
No deintee morsel passed thurgh hire throte;
Hire diete was accordant to hire cote:
Repletion ne made hire never sike;
Attempre diete was all hire physike,
And exercise, and hertes suffisance;
The goute let hire nothing for to dance,
Ne apoplexie shente not hire hed:
No win ne dranke she nyther white ne red:
Hire bord was served most with white and black,
Milk and broun bred, in which she fond no lack,

Seinde bacon, and somtime an eye or twey,
For she was as it were a manner dey.
A yerd she had enclosed all about
With stickes, and a drie diche without,
In which she had a cok highte Chaunteclere,
In all the land of crowing n'as his pere:
His vois was merier than the mery orgon
On masse daies that in the chirches gon:
Wel sikerer was his crowing in his loge
Than is a clok or any abbey orloge:
By nature he knewe eche ascentioun
Of the equinoctial in thilke toun,
For whan degrees fiftene were ascended
Than crew he that it might not ben amended.
His combe was redder than the fin corall,
Enbattelled as it were a castel wall;
His bill was black, and as the jet it shone,
Like asure were his legges and his tone,
His nailes whiter than the lily flour,
And like the burned gold was his colour.
This gentil cok had in his governance
Seven hennes for to don all his plesance,
Which were his susters and his paramoures,
And wonder like to him as of coloures,
Of which the fairest, hewed in the throte,
Was cleped faire Damoselle Pertelote.
Curteis she was, descrete and debonaire,
And compenable, and bare hireself so faire,
Sithen the day that she was sevennight old,
That trewelich she hath the herte in hold
Of Chaunteclere, loken in every lith;
He loved hire so, that wel was him therwith:
But swiche a joye it was to here hem sing,
Whan that the brighte sonne gan to spring,
In swete accord: my lefe is fare in lond.
For thilke time, as I have understond,
Bestes and briddes couden speke and sing.
And so befell that in a dawening
As Chaunteclere among his wives alle
Sate on his perche that was in the halle,
And next him sate his faire Pertelote,
This Chaunteclere gan gronnen in his throte
As man that in his dreme is dretched sore;
And whan that Pertelote thus herd him rore
She was agast, and saide, herte dere,
What aileth you to grone in this manner?

Ye ben a veray sleper, fy for shame.
And he answered and sayde thus; Madame,
I pray you that ye take it not agrefe;
By God me mette I was in swiche mischiefe
Right now, that yet min herte is sore afright.
Now God (quod he) my sweven recche aright,
And kepe my body out of foule prisoun.
My mette how that I romed up and doun
Within our yerde, wher as I saw a beste
Was like an hound, and wold han made areste
Upon my body, and han had me ded:
His colour was betwix yelwe and red,
And tipped was his tail and both his eres
With black, unlike the remenant of his heres:
His snout was smal, with glowing eyen twey;
Yet for his loke almost for fere I dey:
This caused me my groning douteles.
Avoy, quod she; fy on you herteles.
Alas! quod she, for by that God above
Now han ye lost myn herte and all my love:
I cannot love a coward by my faith;
For certes, what so any woman saith,
We al desiren, if it mighte be,
To have an husbond hardy, wise, and free,
And secree, and non niggard ne no fool,
Ne him that is agast of every tool,
Ne non avantour by that God above.
How dorsten ye for shame say to your love
That any thing might maken you aferde?
Han ye no mannes herte and han a berde?
Alas! and con ye ben agast of swevenis?
Nothing but vanitee, God wote, in sweven is.
Swevenes engendren of repletions,
And oft of fume, and of complexions,
Whan humours ben to habundant in a wight.
Certes this dreme which ye han met to-night
Cometh of the gret superfluitee
Of youre rede *colera* parde,
Which causeth folk to dreden in her dremes
Of arwes, and of fire with rede lemes,
Of rede bestes that they wol hem bite,
Of conteke, and of waspes gret and lite,
Right as the humour of melancolie
Causeth ful many a man in slepe to crie
For fere of bolles and of beres blake,
Or elles that blake devils wol hem take.

Of other humours coud I telle also,
That werken many a man in slepe moch wo;
But I wol passe as lightly as I can.
Lo Caton, which that was so wise a man,
Said he not thus? Ne do no force of dremes.
Now, Sire, quod she, whan we flee fro the bemes
For Goddes love as take som laxatif:
Up peril of my soule, and of my lif
I counseil you the best, I wol not lie,
That both of coler and of melancolie
Ye purge you; and for ye shul not tarie,
Though in this toun be non apotecarie,
I shal myself two herbes techen you
That shal be for your hele and for your prow,
And in our yerde the herbes shall I finde,
The which han of hir propretee by kinde
To purgen you benethe and eke above.
Sire, forgete not this for Goddes love;
Ye ben ful colerike of complexion;
Ware that the sonne in his ascention
Ne finde you not replete of humours hote;
And if it do, I dare wel lay a grote
That ye shul han a fever tertiane,
Or elles an ague, that may be your bane.
A day or two ye shul han digestives
Of wormes or ye take your laxatives,
Of laureole, centaurie, and fumetere,
Or elles of ellebor that groweth there,
Of catapuce or of gaitre beries,
Or herbe ive growing in our yerd that mery is;
Picke hem right as they grow, and ete hem in.
Beth mery, husbond; for your fader kin
Dredeth no dreme: I can say you no more.
Madame, quod he, *grand mercy* of your lore;
But natheles as touching Dan Caton,
That hath of wisdome swiche a gret renoun,
Though that he bade no dremes for to drede,
By God, men moun in olde bookes rede
Of many a man more of auctoritee
Than ever Caton was, so mote I the,
That all the revers sayn of his sentence,
And han wel founden by experience,
That dremes ben significations
As wel of joye as tribulations
That folk enduren in this lif present:
Ther nedeth make of this non argument;

The veray preve sheweth it indede.
On of the gretest auctours that men rede
Saith thus, that whilom twey felawes wente
On pilgrimage in a ful good entente,
And happed so they came into a toun
Wher ther was swiche a congregatioun
Of peple, and eke so streit of herbergage,
That they ne founde as moche as a cotage
In which they bothe might ylogged be,
Wherfore they musten of necessitee;
As for that night, departen compagnie;
And eche of hem goth to his hostelrie,
And toke his logging as it wolde falle.
That on of hem was logged in a stalle,
Fer in a yard, with oxen of the plough,
That other man was logged wel ynough,
As was his aventure or his fortune,
That us governeth all, as in commune.
And so befell that long or it were day
This man met in his bed, ther as he lay,
How that his felaw gan upon him calle,
And said, Alas! for in an oxen stalle
This night shal I be mordred ther I lie;
Now help me, dere brother! or I die:
In alle haste come to me, he saide.
This man out of his slepe for fere abraide;
But whan that he was waken of his slepe
He turned him, and toke of this no kepe;
Him thought his dreme was but a vanitee.
Thus twies in his sleping dremed he.
And at the thridde time yet his felaw
Came, as him thought, and said, I now am slaw;
Behold my blody woundes depe and wide:
Arise up erly in the morwe tide,
And at the west gate of the toun (quod he)
A carte ful of donge ther shalt thou see,
In which my body is hid prively;
Do thilke carte arresten boldely.
My gold caused my mordre, soth to sain;
And told him every point how he was slain
With a ful pitous face, pale of hewe.
And trusteth wel his dreme he found ful trewe.
For on the morwe sone as it was day
To his felawes inne he toke his way,
And whan that he came to this oxes stalle
After his felaw he began to calle.

The hosteler answered him anon,
And saide, Sire, your felaw is agon;
As sone as day he went out of the toun.
This man gan fallen in suspecioun,
Remembring on his dremes that he mette,
And forth he goth, no lenger wold he lette,
Unto the west gate of the toun, and fond
A dong carte as it went for to dong lond,
That was arraied in the same wise
As ye han herde the dede man devise;
And with an hardy herte he gan to crie
Vengeance and justice of this felonie;
My felaw mordred is this same night,
And in this carte he lith gaping upright.
I crie out on the ministres, quod he,
That shulden kepe and reulen this citee:
Harow! alas! here lith my felaw slain.
What shuld I more unto this tale sain?
The peple out stert, and cast the cart to ground,
And in the middle of the dong they found
The dede man that mordred was all newe.
O blisful God! that art so good and trewe,
Lo, how that thou bewreyest mordre alway!
Mordre wol out, that see we day by day:
Mordre is so wlatsom and abhominable
To God, that is so just and resonable,
That he ne wol not suffre it hylled be:
Though it abide a yere, or two or three,
Mordre wol out; this is my conclusioun.
And right anon the ministres of the toun
Han hent the carter, and so sore him pined,
And eke the hosteler so sore engined,
That they beknewe hir wickednesse anon,
And were anhanged by the necke bon.
Here moun ye see that dremes ben to drede.
And certes in the same book I rede,
Right in the next chapitre after this,
(I gabbe not, so have I joye and blis)
Two men that wold han passed over the see,
For certain cause, in to a fer contree,
If that the winde ne hadde ben contrarie,
That made hem in a citee for to tarie
That stood ful mery upon a haven side:
But on a day, agein the even tide,
The wind gan change, and blew right as hem lest:
Jolif and glad they wenten to hir rest,

And casten hem ful erly for to saile;
But to that o man fel a gret mervaile.
That on of hem in sleping as he lay
He mette a wondre dreme again the day:
Him thought a man stood by his beddes side,
And him commanded that he shuld abide,
And said him thus; If thou to-morwe wende
Thou shalt be dreint; my tale is at an ende.
He woke, and told his felaw what he met,
And praied him his viage for to let;
As for that day he prayd him for to abide.
His felaw, that lay by his beddes side,
Gan for to laugh, and scorned him ful faste:
No dreme, quod he, may so my herte agaste
That I wol leten for to do my thinges:
I sette not a straw by thy dreminges,
For swevens ben but vanitees and japes:
Men dreme al day of oules and of apes,
And eke of many a mase therwithal;
Men dreme of thing that never was ne shal.
But sith I see that thou wol there abide,
And thus forslouthen wilfully thy tide,
God wot it reweth me; and have good day:
And thus he took his leve, and went his way.
But or that he had half his cours ysailed,
N'ot I not why, ne what mischance it ailed,
But casuelly the shippes bottom rente,
And ship and man under the water wente
In sight of other shippes ther beside
That with him sailed at the same tide.
And therefore, faire Pertelote so dere,
By swiche ensamples olde maist thou lere
That no man shulde be to reccheles
Of dremes, for I say thee douteles
That many a dreme ful sore is for to drede.
Lo, in the lif of Seint Kenelme I rede,
That was Kenulphus sone, the noble King
Of Mercenrike, how Kenelm mette a thing.
A litel or he were mordered on a day
His mordre in his avision he say;
His norice him expouned every del
His sweven, and bade him for to kepe him wel
Fro treson; but he n'as but seven yere old,
And therefore litel tale hath he told
Of any dreme, so holy was his herte.
By God I hadde lever than my sherte

That ye had red his legend as have I.
Dame Pertelote, I say you trewely,
Macrobius, that writ the avision
In Affrike of the worthy Scipion,
Affirmeth dremes, and sayth that they ben
Warning of thinges that men after seen.
And forthermore, I pray you loketh wel
In The Olde Testament of Daniel,
If he held dremes any vanitee.
Rede eke of Joseph, and ther shuln ye see
Wher dremes ben somtime (I say not alle)
Warning of thinges that shuln after falle.
Loke of Egipt the king, Dan Pharao,
His baker and his boteler also,
Wheder they ne felten non effect in dremes.
Who so wol seken actes of sondry remes
May rede of dremes many a wonder thing.
Lo Cresus, which that was of Lydie king,
Mette he not that he sat upon a tree?
Which signified he shuld anhanged be.
Lo hire Adromacha, Hectores wif,
That day that Hector shulde lese his lif,
She dremed on the same nighte beforne
How that the lif of Hector shuld be lorne
If thilke day he went into bataille;
She warned him, but it might not availle;
He went forth for to fighten natheles,
And was yslain anon of Achilles.
But thilke tale is al to long to telle,
And eke it is nigh day, I may not dwelle.
Shortly I say, as for conclusion,
That I shal han of this avision
Adversitee; and I say forthermore,
That I ne tell of laxatives no store,
For they ben venimous, I wot it wel:
I hem deffie; I love hem never a del.
But let us speke of mirthe, and stinte all this.
Madame Pertelote, so have I blis,
Of o thing God hath sent me large grace,
For whan I see the beautee of your face,
Ye ben so scarlet red about your eyen,
It maketh all my drede for to dien;
For al so siker as *In principio*
Mulier est hominis confusio.
(Madame, the sentence of this Latine is,
Woman is mannes joye and mannes blis;)

For whan I fele a-night your softe side,
Al be it that I may not on you ride
For that our perche is made so narwe, alas!
I am so ful of joye and of solas
That I deffie bothe sweven and dreme.
And with that word he flew doun fro the beme,
For it was day, and eke his hennes alle,
And with a chuk he gan hem for to calle,
For he had found a corn lay in the yerd.
Real he was, he was no more aferd;
He fethered Pertelote twenty time,
And trade hire eke as oft, er it was prime:
He loketh as it were a grim leoun,
And on his toos he rometh up and doun;
Him deigned not to set his feet to ground:
He chukketh, whan he hath a corn yfound,
And to him rennen than his wives alle.
Thus real, as a prince is in his halle,
Leve I this Chaunteclere in his pasture;
And after wol I till his aventure.
Whan that the month in which the world began,
That highte March, whan God first maked man,
Was complete, and ypassed were also,
Sithen March ended thritty dayes and two,
Befell that Chaunteclere in all his pride,
His seven wives walking him beside,
Cast up his eyen to the brighte sonne,
That in the signe of Taurus hadde yronne
Twenty degrees and on, and somwhat more:
He knew by kind, and by non other lore,
That it was prime, and crew with blisful steven.
The sonne, he said, is clomben up on heven
Twenty degrees and on, and more ywis;
Madame Pertelote, my worldes blis,
Herkeneth thise blisful briddes how they sing,
And see the freshe floures how they spring;
Ful is min herte of revel, and solas.
But sodenly him fell a sorweful cas,
For ever the latter ende of joye is wo;
God wote that worldly joye is sone ago;
And if a rethor coude faire endite
He in a chronicle might it saufly write
As for a soveraine notabilitee.
Now every wise man let him herken me:
This story is also trewe, I undertake,
As is the book of Launcelot du Lake,

That women holde in ful gret reverence.
Now wol I turne agen to my sentence.
A col fox, ful of sleigh iniquitee,
That in the grove had wonned yeres three,
By high imagination forecast,
The same night thurghout the hegges brast
Into the yerd ther Chaunteclere the faire
Was wont, and eke his wives, to repaire,
And in a bedde of wortes stille he lay
Till it was passed undern of the day,
Waiting his time on Chaunteclere to falle,
As gladly don thise homicides alle
That in await liggen to mordre men.
O false morderour! rucking in thy den,
O newe Scariot, newe Genelon!
O false dissimulour, o Greek Sinon!
That broughtest Troye al utterly to sorwe,
O Chaunteclere! accursed be the morwe,
That thou into thy yerd flew fro the bemes;
Thou were ful wel ywarned by thy dremes
That thilke day was perilous to thee:
But what that God forewote most nedes be,
After the opinion of certain clerkes,
Witnesse on him that any parfit clerk is,
That in scole is gret altercation
In this matere and gret disputison,
And hath ben of an hundred thousand men:
But I ne cannot boult it to the bren,
As can the holy Doctour Augustin,
Or Boece, or the bishop Bradwardin,
Whether that Goddes worthy foreweting
Streineth me nedely for to don a thing,
(Nedely clepe I simple necessitee)
Or elles if free chois be granted me
To do that same thing, or do it nought,
Though God forewot it, or that it was wrought;
Or if his weting streineth never a del
But by necessitee condicionel.
I wol not han to don of swiche matere;
My Tale is of a cok, as ye may here,
That took his conseil of his wif and sorwe
To walken in the yerd upon the morwe
That he had met the dreme, as I you told.
Womennes conseiles ben ful often cold;
Womennes conseil brought us first to wo,
And made Adam fro Paradis to go,

Ther as he was ful mery and wel at ese:
But for I n'ot to whom I might displese
If I conseil of women wolde blame,
Passe over, for I said it in my game.
Rede auctours where they trete of swiche matere,
And what they sayn of women ye mown here.
Thise ben the Cokkes wordes and not mine;
I can non harme of no woman devine.
Faire in the sond, to bath hire merily,
Lith Pertelote, and all hire susters by,
Agein the sonne, and Chaunteclere so free
Sang merrier than the mermaid in the see,
For Phisiologus sayth sikerly
How that they singen wel and merily.
And so befell that as he cast his eye
Among the wortes on a boterflie
He was ware of this fox that lay ful low:
Nothing ne list him thaune for to crow,
But cried anon Cok, cok, and up he sterte
As man that was affraied in his herte;
For naturally a beest desireth flee
Fro his contrarie if he may it see,
Though he never erst had seen it with his eye.
This Chaunteclere, whan he gan him espie,
He wold han fled, but that the fox anon
Said, Gentil Sire, alas! what wol ye don?
Be ye affraid of me that am your frend?
Now certes I were werse than any fend
If I to you wold harme or vilanie.
I n'am not come your conseil to espie,
But trewely the cause of my coming
Was only for to herken how ye sing.
For trewely ye han as mery a steven
As any angel hath that is in heven,
Therwith ye han of musike more feling
Than had Boece, or any that can sing.
My Lord, your fader (God his soule blesse)
And eke your moder of hire gentillesse
Han in myn hous yben, to my gret ese,
And certes, Sire, ful fain wold I you plese.
But for men speke of singen, I wol sey,
So mote I brouken wel min eyen twey,
Save you, ne herd I never man so sing
As did your fader in the morwening:
Certes it was of herte all that he song.
And for to make his vois the more strong

He wold so peine him, that with both his eyen
He muste winke, so loude he walde crien,
And stonden on his tiptoon therwithal,
And stretchen forth his necke long and smal.
And eke he was of swiche discretion,
That ther n'as no man in no region
That him in song or wisdom mighte passe.
I have wel red in Dan Burnel the asse
Among his vers, how that ther was a cok
That for a preestes sone yave him a knok
Upon his leg, while he was yonge and nice,
He made him for to lese his benefice;
But certain ther is no comparison
Betwixt the wisdom and discretion
Of your fader and his subtilitee.
Now singeth, Sire, for Seint Charitee:
Let see, can ye your fader countrefete?
This Chaunteclere his winges gan to bete,
As man that coud not his treson espie,
So was he ravished with his flaterie.
Alas! ye lordes, many a false flatour
Is in your court, and many a losengeour,
That pleseth you wel more, by my faith,
Than he that sothfastnesse unto you saith,
Redeth Ecclesiast of flaterie:
Beth ware, ye lordes, of hire trecherie.
This Chaunteclere stood high upon his toos
Strecching his necke, and held his eyen cloos
And gan to crowen loude for the nones;
And Dan Russel the fox stert up at ones,
And by the gargat hente Chaunteclere,
And on his back toward the wood him bere,
For yet ne was ther no man that him sued.
O destinee! that maist not ben eschued,
Alas that Chaunteclere flew fro the bemes!
Alas, his wif ne raughte not of dremes!
And on a Friday fell all this meschance.
O Venus! that art goddesse of Plesance,
Sin that thy servant was this Chaunteclere,
And in thy service did all his powere,
More for delit, than world to multiplie,
Why wolt thou suffre him on thy day to die?
O Gaufride, dere maister soverain!
That whan thy worthy King Richard was slain
With shot, complainedst his deth so sore,
Why ne had I now thy science and thy lore,

The Friday for to chiden as did ye?
(For on a Friday sothly slain was he)
Then wold I shew you how that I coud plaine
For Chaunteclere's drede and for his paine.
Certes swiche cry ne lamentation
N'as never of ladies made whan Ilion
Was wonne, and Pirrus with his streite swerd,
When he had hent King Priam by the berd,
And slain him, (as saith us *Eneidus*)
As maden all the hennes in the cloos
Whan they had seen of Chaunteclere the sight;
But soverainly Dame Pertelote shright
Ful louder than did Hasdruballes wif,
Whan that hire husbond hadde ylost his lif,
And that the Romaines hadden brent Cartage;
She was so ful of turment and of rage
That wilfully into the fire she sterte,
And brent hire selven with a stedfast herte.
O woful hennes! right so criden ye,
As whan that Nero brente the citee
Of Rome, cried the Senatoures wives,
For that hir husbonds losten alle hir lives.
Withouten gilt this Nero hath hem slain.
Now wol I turne unto my tale again.
The sely widewe and hire doughtren two,
Harden these hennes crie and maken wo,
And out at the dores sterten they anon,
And saw the fox toward the wode is gon,
And bare upon his back the cok away:
They crieden out, Harow! and wala wa!
A ha the fox! and after him they ran,
And eke with staves many an other man;
Ran Colle our dogge, and Talbot and Gerlond,
And Malkin, with hire distaf in hire hond;
Ran cow and calf; and eke the veray hogges
So fered were for barking of the dogges,
And shouting of the men and women eke,
They ronnen so, hem thought hir hertes breke;
They yelleden as fendes don in helle;
The dokes crieden as men wold hem quelle:
The gees for fere flewen over the trees,
Out of the hive came the swarme of bees,
So hidous was the noise, a *benedicite!*
Certes he Jakke Straw and his meinie,
Ne maden never shoutes half so shrille,
Whan that they wolden any Fleming kille,

As thilke day was made upon the fox.
Of bras they broughten beemes and of box,
Of horn and bone, in which they blew and pouped,
And therwithal they shriked and they houped;
It semed as that the heven shulde falle.
Now, goode men, I pray you herkeneth alle:
Lo how Fortune turneth sodenly
The hope and pride eke of hire enemy.
This cok that lay upon the foxes bake,
In all his drede unto the fox he spake,
And sayde; Sire, if that I were as ye
Yet wold I sayn, (as wisly God helpe me)
Turneth agein, ye proude cherles alle,
A veray pestilence upon you falle:
Now I am come unto the wodes side,
Maugre your hed, the cok shal here abide;
I wol him ete in faith, and that anon.
The fox answered, in faith it shal be don;
And as he spake the word, al sodenly
The cok brake from his mouth deliverly,
And high upon a tree he flew anon.
And whan the fox saw that the cok was gon,
Alas! quod he, o Chaunteclere, alas!
I have (quod he) ydon to you trespas,
In as moche as I maked you aferd,
Whan I you hente and brought out of your yerd;
But, Sire, I did it in no wikke entente:
Come doun, and I shal tell you what I mente:
I shall say sothe to you, God help me so.
Nay than, quod he, I shrewe us bothe two;
And first I shrewe myself bothe blood and bones
If thou begile me oftener than ones:
Thou shalt no more thurgh thy flaterie
Do me to sing and winken with myn eye,
For he that winketh whan he shulde see,
Al wilfully, God let him never the.
Nay, quod the fox, but God yeve him meschance,
That is so indiscrete of governance,
That jangleth whan that he shuld hold his pees.
Lo, which it is for to be reccheles
And negligent, and trust on flaterie.
But ye that holden this Tale a folie,
As of a fox, or of a cok or hen,
Taketh the moralitee therof, good men;
For Seint Poule sayth, that all that writen is,
To our doctrine it is ywriten ywis.

Taketh the fruit, and let the chaf be stille.
Now, goode God, if that it be thy wille,
As sayth my Lord, so make us all good men,
And bring us to thy high blisse. *Amen.*
Sire Nonnes Preest, our Hoste sayd anon,
Yblessed be thy breche and every ston;
This was a mery tale of Chaunteclere:
But by my trouthe if thou were seculere,
Thou woldest ben a tredefoule a right:
For if thou have courage as thou hast might
Thee were nede of hennes, as I wene,
Ye mo than seven times seventene.
Se whiche braunes hath this gentil Preest,
So gret a necke and swiche a large breest!
He loketh as a sparhauk with his eyen:
Him nedeth not his colour for to dien
With Brasil, ne with grain of Portingale.
But, Sire, faire falle you for your tale.
And after that he with ful mery chere
Sayd to another, as ye shulen here.

THE

FLOUR AND THE LEFE.

THE ARGUMENT.

A gentlewoman out of an arbour in a grove seeth a great company of knights and ladies in a dance upon the green grass; the which being ended, they all kneel down and do honour to the daisie, some to the Flower, and some to the Leaf. Afterward this gentlewoman learneth, by one of these ladies, the meaning hereof, which is this: They which honour the Flower, a thing fading with every blast, are such as look after beauty and worldly pleasure; but they that honour the Leaf, which abideth with the root, notwithstanding the frosts and winter storms, are they which follow virtue and during qualities, without regard of worldly respects.

When that Phœbus his chair of gold so hie
Had whirlid up the sterrie sky aloft,
And in the Bole was entrid certainly,
When shouris sote of rain descendid soft,
Causing the ground felè timis and oft
Up for to give many an wholesome air,
And every plain was yclothid faire:
With newè grene, and makith smalè flours
To springin here and there in field and mede,
So very gode and wholesome be the shours,
That they renewn that was old and dede
In winter time, and out of every sede
Springith the herbè, so that every wight
Of this seson wexith richt glade and licht.

And I so gladè of the seson swete,
Was happid thus; upon a certain night
As I lay in my bed slepe full unmete
Was unto me, but why that I ne might
Rest I ne wist, for there n'as erthly wight
[As I suppose] had more of hertis ese
Than I, for I n'ad sicknesse nor disese:
Wherefore I mervaile gretly of my self
That I so long withoutin slepè lay,
And up I rose thre houris aftir twelfe,
About the springing of the gladsome day,
And on I put my gear and mine aray,
And to a plesaunt grove I gan to pas
Long or the bright sonne uprisin was;
In which were okis grete, streight as a line,
Undir the which the grass so freshe of hewe
Was newly sprong, and an eight fote or nine
Every tre well fro his fellow grew,
With braunchis brode laden with levis new,
That sprongin out agen the sonne shene:
Some very rede, and some a glad light grene:
Which [as me thought] was a right plesaunt sight;
And eke the birdis songis for to here
Would have rejoisid any erthly wight,
And I, that couth not yet in no manere
Herein the nightingale of all the yere,
Full busily herk'nid with hert and ere
If I her voice perceve could any where:
And at the last a path of litil brede
I found, that gretly had not usid be,
For it forgrowin was with grass and wede,
That well unnethis a wight might it se;
Thought I, this path some whider doth parde;
And so I followid till it me brought
To a right plesant herbir wel ywrought,
Which that benchid was, and with turfis new
Freshly turvid, whereof the grene grass
So small, so thick, so short, so fresh of hewe,
That most like to grene woll wot I it was;
The hegge also, that yedin in compas,
And closid in allè the grene herbere,
With sycamor was set and eglatere.
Within, in fere so well and cunningly,
That every braunch and lefe grew by mesure
Plain as a bord, of an height by and by;
I se nevir a thing [I you ensure]

So well ydone, for he that toke the cure
It for to make [I trowe] did all his peine
To mak it pas al tho that men have seine.
And shapin was this herber rofe and al
As is a pretty parlour, and also
The hegge as thick as is a castil wall,
That who that list without to stond or go,
Thogh he wold al day prayin to and fro,
He should not se if there were any wight
Within or no, but one within well might---
Perceve all tho that ydin there without
Into the field, that was on every side
Coverd with corn and grass, that out of doubt
Tho one would sekin all the worlde wide
So rich a feldè could not be espyde
Upon no cost, as of the quantity,
For of allè godè thing there was plenty.
And I, that al these plesaunt sightis se,
Thought suddainly I felt so swete an air
Of the eglaterè, that certainly
There is no hert [I deme] in such dispair,
Ne yet with thoughtis froward and contraire
So overlaid, but it should sone have bote
If it had onis felt this savour sote.
And as I stode and cast aside mine eye
I was ware of the fairist medler tre
That evir yet in all my life I se,
As full of blossomis as it might be,
Therein a goldfinch leping pretily
From bough to bough, and as him list he ete
Here and there of buddis and flouris swete.
And to the herbir side was adjoyning
This fairist tre of which I have you told,
And at the last the bird began to sing
[Whan he had etin what he etin would]
So passing swetely that by many fold
It was more plesaunt than I couth devise;
And whan his song was endid in this wise,
The nightingale with so mery a note
Answerid him, that alle the wode yrong
So sodainly, that as it were a sote
I stode astonied, and was with the song
Thorow ravishid, that till late and long
I ne wist in what place I was ne where,
Ayen methought she song e'en by mine ere:

Wherefore I waited about busily
On every side if I her might se,
And at the last I gan full well espie
Where she sate in a fresh grene laury tre,
On the further side evin right by me,
That gave so passing a delicious smell,
According to the eglantere full well;
Whereof I had so inly grete plesure,
As methought I surely ravished was
Into Paradise, wherein my desire
Was for to be, and no ferthir to pas
As for that day, and on the sotè grass
I sat me down, for as for mine entent
The birdis song was more convenient,
And more plesaunt to me by many fold
Than mete or drink, or any othir thing,
Thereto the herbir was so fresh and cold,
The wholsome savours eke so comforting,
That [as I demid] sith the beginning
Of the worldè was nevir seen er than
So plesaunt a ground of none erthly man.
And as I sat the birdis herkening thus,
Methought that I herd voicis suddainly,
The most swetist and most delicious
That evir any wight I trow trewly
Herdin in hir life, for the armony
And swete accord was in so gode musike
That the voicis to angels most were like.
At the last out of a grove evin by
[That was right godely and plesaunt to sight]
I se where there came singing lustily
A world of ladies, but to tell aright
Ther beauty grete lyith not in my might,
Ne ther array; nevirthèless I shall
Tell you a pert, tho' I speke not of all:
The surcots white of velvet well fitting
They werin clad, and the semis eche one,
As it werin a mannir garnishing,
Was set with emeraudis one and one
By and by, but many a richè stone
Was set on the purfilis out of dout
Of collours, sleves, and trainis, round about;
As of grete perlis round and orient,
And diamondis fine and rubys red,
And many othir stone of which I went

The namis now; and everich on her hede
A rich fret of gold, which withoutin drede
Was full of statèly rich stonys set,
And evrey lady had a chapelet,
On ther hedis of braunchis fresh and grene,
So wele ywrought, and so marvelously,
That it was a right noble sight to sene,
Some of laurir, and some full plesauntly
Had chapèlets of wodebind, and sadly
Some of agnus castus werin also,
Chaplets fresh; but there were many of tho,
That dauncid and eke song full sobirly,
But all they yede in maner of compace;
But one there yede in mid the company
Sole by herself; but all follow'd the pace
That she keept, whose hevinly figured face
So pleasaunt was, and her wele shape person,
That of beauty she past them everichone,
And more richly beseen by manyfold
She was also in every manir thing;
Upon her hede full plesaunt to behold
A coron of gold rich for any king,
A braunch of agnus castus eke bering
In her hand, and to my sight trewily
She lady was of all the compagnie;
And she began a roundell lustily
That *Sus le foyle de vert moy* men call
Sine & mon joly cœur est endormy,
And than the company answerid all,
With voicis swete entunid and so small,
That methought it the swetest melody
That evir I herd in my lyf sothly.
And thus they all came dauncing and singing
Into the middis of the mede echone,
Before the herbir where I was sitting,
And God wot I thought I was well bigone,
For than I might avise them one by one
Who fairist was, who best could dance or sing,
Or who most womanly was in all thing.
They had not dauncid but a little throw
When that I herd not fer of sodainly
So grete a noise of thundering trumpis blow
As though it should have departid the skie,
And aftir that within a while I sie
From the same grove where the ladies came out
Of men of armis coming such a rout,

As all men on erth had ben assemblid,
On that place well horsid for the nonis,
Stering so fast that all the erth tremblid;
But for to speke of richis and stonis,
And men and horse, I trow the large wonis
Of Pretir John, ne all his tresory,
Might not unneth have bought the tenth party.
Of their array whoso list to here more,
I shall reherse so as I can a lite,
Out of the grove that I speke of before
I se come first, all in their clokis white,
A company that wore for ther delite
Chapèlets fresh of okis serial
But newly sprong, and trumpets were they all;
On every trump hanging a brode bannere
Of fine tartarium, full richly bete,
Every trumpet his lord'is armis bere
About ther nekkis, with grete perlis sete,
Collaris brode, for cost they wou'd not lete,
As it would seem, for ther scochons echone
Were set about with many a precious stone;
Ther horsis harneis was all white also;
And aftir them next in one company
Camin kingis at armis and no mo,
In clokis of white cloth with gold richly,
Chaplets of grene on ther heds on hye,
The crownis that they on ther scotchons bere
Were set with perl, and ruby, and saphere,
And eke grete diamondis many one;
But all ther horsis harneis and other gere
Was in a sute according everichone,
As ye have herd the foresaid trumpets were,
And by semmg they were nothing to lere,
And ther guiding they did so manirly;
And aftir them came a gret company
Of heraudeis and pursevauntis eke,
Arrayid in clothis of white velvet,
And hardily they were nothing to seke
How they on them shouldin the harneis set,
And every man had on a chapèlet,
Scotchonis and eke horse harneis in dede
They had in sute of them that 'fore them yede.
Next after these appere in armour bright,
All save ther hedis, semely knightis nine,
And every clasp and nail, as to my sight,

Of ther harneis were of red gold so fine,
With cloth of gold, and furrid with ermine,
Were the tappouris of their stedis strong,
Both wide and large, that to the ground did hong;
And every boss of bridle and paitrel
That they had on was worth, as I would wene,
A thousand pound; and on ther hedis well
Dressid were crounis of the laurir grene,
The best ymade that evir I had sene;
And every knight had aftir him riding
Thre henchmen, still upon him awaiting;
Of which every (first) on a short trunchon
His lord'is helmet bore so richly dight
That the worst of them was worth the ransoume
Of any king; the second a shield bright
Bare at his back; the thred barin upright
A mighty spere, full sharp yground and kene,
And every child ware of levis grene
A fresh chap'let upon his hairis bright;
And clokis white of fine velvet they were;
Ther stedis trappid and arayid right,
Without difference as ther lordis were;
And aftir them on many' a fresh coursere
There came of armid knightis such a rout
That they besprad the large field about;
And all they werin, aftir ther degrees,
Chappèlets new, or made of laurir grene,
Or some of oke, or some of othir trees,
Some in ther hondis barin boughis shene,
Some of laurir, and some of okis bene,
Some of hawthorne, and some of the wodebind,
And many mo which I have not in mind.
And so they came ther horse freshly stirring
With bloudy sownis of ther trompis loud;
There se I many an uncouth disguising
In the array of thilkè knightis proud;
And at the last as evenly as they coud
They toke ther place in middis of the mede,
And every knight turnid his horsis hede
To his felow, and lightly laid a spere
Into the rest, and so justis began
On every part aboutin here and there;
Some brake his spere, some threw down horse and man,
About the felde astray the stedis ran;
And to behold their rule and govirnance
I you ensure it was a grete plesaunce.

And so the justis last an hour and more
But tho that crownid were in laurir grene
Did win the prise; their dintis were so sore
That there was none agenst them might sustene,
And the justing allè was left off clene;
And fro ther horse the nine alight anon,
And so did all the remnaunt everichone;
And forth they yede togidir twain and twain,
That to behold it was a worthy sight,
Toward the ladies on the grenè plain,
That song and dauncid, as I said now right;
The ladies as sone as they godely might
They brakin off both the song and the dance
And yede to mete them with full glad semblaunce:
And every lady toke full womanly
By the hond a knight, and so forth they yede
Unto a faire laurir that stode fast by,
With levis laid, the boughis of grete brede,
And to my dome ther nevir was indede
A man that had sene half so faire a tre,
For undirneth it there might well have be
An hundrid persons at ther own plesaunce
Shadowid fro the hete of Phœbus bright,
So that they shouldin have felt no grevance
Neithir for rain, ne haile, that them hurt might;
The savour eke rejoice would any wight
That hed be sick or melancholious,
It was so very gode and vertuous.
And with grete rev'rence they enclinid low
Unto the tre so sote and fair of hew,
And aftir that within a litil throw
They all began to sing and daunce of new;
Some song of love, some plaining of untrew,
Environing the tre that stode upright,
And evir yede a lady and a knight.
And at the last I cast mine eie aside,
And was ware of a lusty company
That came roming out of the feldè wide,
And hond in hond a knight and a lady,
The ladies all in surcotes, that richly
Purfilid were with many a rich stone,
And every knight of grene ware mantlis on,
Embroulid wele, so as the surcots were,
And everich had a chapelet on her hed,
[Which did right wele upon the shining here]

Makid of godely flouris white and red,
The knightis eke that they in hondè led
In sute of them ware chaplets everichone,
And before them went minstrels many one;
As harpis, pipis, lutis, and sautry,
Allè in grene, and on ther hedis bare
Of diverse flouris made ful craftily,
Al in a sute, godely chaplets they ware,
And so dauncing into the mede they fare,
In mid the which they found a tuft that was
Al ovirsprad with flouris in compas:
Whereto they enclined evèrichone
With grete revèrence, and that full humbly;
And at the last there tho began anon
A lady for to sing right womanly
A bargaret in praising the daisie,
For (as methought) among her notis swete
She said *Si douce est la Margarete!*
Then they allè answerid her in fere
So passingly well and so plesauntly,
That it was a most blisfull noise to here;
But I 'not how it happid, sodainly
As about none the sonne so fervently
Waxe hotè that the pretty tendir floures
Had lost the beauty of their fresh collours.
For shronke with hete the ladies eke to brent,
That they ne wist where they them might bestow,
The knightis swelt, for lack of shade nie shent,
And aftir that within a litil throw
The wind began so sturdily to blow
That down goth all the flowris everichone,
So that in all the mede there laft not one,
Save such as succoured were among the leves
Fro every storme that mightè them assaile,
Growing undir the heggis and thick greves;
And aftir that there came a storme of haile
And rain in fere, so that withoutin faile
The ladies ne the knightis n'ade o' thred
Dry on them, so drooping wet was ther wede.
And when the storme was clene passid away
Tho in the white, that stode undir the tre,
They felt nothing of all the grete affray
That they in grene without had in ybe;
To them they yede for routh and for pite,
Them to comfort aftir their grete disese,
So fain they were the helplesse for to ese.

Than I was ware how one of them in grene
Had on a coron rich and well-fitting,
Wherefore I demid well she was a quenę,
And tho in grene on her were awaiting;
The ladies then in white that were coming
Towardis them, and the knightis in fere,
Began to comfort them and make them chere.
The quene in white, that was of grete beauty,
Toke by the honde the quene that was in grene,
And seidè, Sustir, I have grete pity
Of your annoy and of your troublous tene
Wherein ye and your company have bene
So long, alas! and if that if you plese
To go with me I shall do you the ese
In al the plesure that I can or may;
Whereof that othir, humbly as she might,
Thankid her, for in right evil array
She was with storme and hete I you behight;
And evèry lady then anon right
That were in white one of them toke in grene
By the hond, which when the knightis had sene
In like manir eche of them toke a knight
Clad in the grene, and forth with them they fare
To an heggè, where that they anon right
To makin these justis they would not spare
Boughis to hew down, and eke trees to square,
Wherewith they made them stately firis grete
To dry ther clothis, that were wringing wete:
And aftir that of herbis that there grew
They made for blistirs of the sonne brenning
Ointmentis very gode, wholsome and new,
Where that they yede the sick fast anointing;
And after that they yede about gadring
Plesant saladis, which they made them ete
For to refreshe ther grete unkindly hete.
The lady of the Lefè then gan to pray
Her of the Floure [for so to my seming
They should be callid as by ther array]
To soupe with her, and eke for any thing
That she should with her all her pepill bringe,
And she ayen in right godely manere
Thankith her fast of her most frendly chere,
Saying plainèly that she would obay
With all her hert all her commandèment;
And then anon without lengir delay

The lady of the Lefe hath one ysent
To bring a palfray aftir her intent,
Arrayid wele in fair harneis of gold,
For nothing lackid that to him long shold:
And aftir that to all her company
She made to purvey horse and every thing
That they nedid, and then full hastily
Even by the herbir where I was sitting
They passid all, so merrily singing
That it would have comfortid any wight:
But then I se a passing wondir sight,
For then the nightingale, that all the day
Had in the laurir sete, and did her might
The whole service to sing longing to May,
All sodainly began to take her flight,
And to the lady of the Lefe forthright
She flew, and set her on her hand softly,
Which was a thing I mervailed at gretly.
The goldfinch eke, that fro the medlar tre
Was fled for hete unto the bushis cold,
Unto the lady of the Flowre gan fle,
And on her hond he set him as he wold,
And plesauntly his wingis gan to fold,
And for to sing they peine them both as sore
As they had do of all the day before.
And so these ladies rode forth a grete pace,
And all the rout of knightis eke in fere;
And I that had sene all this wondir case
Thought that I would assay in some manere
To know fully the trouth of this mattere.
And what they were that rode so plesauntly:
And when they were the herbir passid by
I drest me forth, and happid mete anon
A right fair lady, I do you ensure,
And she came riding by her self alone,
Allè in white, with semblaunce full demure;
I her salued, bad her gode avinture
Mote her befall, as I coud most humbly,
And she answered, My doughtir, gramercy!
Madame, quod I, if that I durst enquere
Of you, I wold fain of that company
Wit what they be that passed by this herbere.
And she ayen answerid right frendly,
My doughtir, all tho that passid hereby
In white clothing be servants everichone
Unto the Lefe, and I my self am one.

See ye not her that crownid is (quod she)
Allè in white? Madame, then quod I, Yes.
That is Dian, goddess of Chastity,
And for bicause that she a maidin is
Into her hond the brance she berith this
That agnus castus men call propirly;
And all the ladies in her company
Which ye se of that herbè chaplets were
Be such as han alwey kept maidinhede,
And all they that of laurir chaplets bere,
Be such as hardy were in manly dede
Victorious, name which nevir may be dede,
And all they were so worthy of their honde
In their time that no one might them withstonde;
And tho that were chapèlets on ther hede
Of fresh wodebind be such as nevir were
To Love untrue in word, in thought, ne dede,
But ay stedfast, ne for plesance ne fere,
Tho that they shulde ther hertis all to tere,
Woud never flit, but evir were stedfast
Till that ther livis there assundir brast.
Now, fair Madame! quod I, yet would I pray
Your ladiship [if that it mightin be]
That I might knowe by some manir of wey,
Sithin that it hath likid your beaute
The trouth of these ladies for to tell me,
What that these knightis be in rich armour,
And what tho be in grene and were the Flour,
And why that some did rev'rence to the tre,
And some unto the plot of flouris fair?
With right gode wil, my doughtir fair! quod she,
Sith your desire is gode and debonaire:
Tho nine crounid be very exemplaire
Of all honour longing to chivalry,
And those certain be clept, The Nine Worthy,
Which that ye may se riding all before,
That in ther time did many' a noble dede,
And for ther worthiness full oft have bore
The crown of laurir levis on ther hede,
As ye may in your oldè bokis rede,
And how that he that was a conqueror
Had by laurir alwey his most honour:
And tho that barin bowes in ther hond
Of the precious laurir so notable,
Be such as were [I woll ye undirstond]

Most noble Knightis of The Round Table,
And eke the Douseperis honourable,
Which they bere in the sign of victory,
As witness of ther dedis mightily:
Eke ther be Knightis old of the Gartir,
That in ther timis did right worthily,
And the honour they did to the laurir
Is for by it they have ther laud wholly,
Ther triumph eke and martial glory,
Which unto them is more perfite riches
Than any wight imagin can or gesse;
For one Lefe givin of that noble tre
To any wight that hath done worthily
[An it be done so as it ought to be]
Is more honour than any thing erthly,
Witness of Rome, that foundir was truly
Of all knighthode and dedis marvelous,
Record I take of Titus Livius.
And as for her that crounid is in grene,
It is Flora, of these flouris goddesse,
And all that here on her awaiting bene
It are such folk that lovid idlenesse,
And not delite in no kind besinesse
But for to hunt, and hawke, and pley in medes,
And many othir such like idle dedes.
And for the grete delite and the plesaunce
They have to the Flour, and so reverently
They unto it doin such obeisaunce,
As ye may se. Now, fair Madame! quod I,
[If I durst ask] what is the cause and why
That knightis have the ensign of honour
Rathir by the Leŧê than by the Flour?
Sothly, doughtir, quod she, this is the truth,
For knightes evir should be persevering
To seke honour without feintise or slouth,
Fro wele to bettir in all manir thing,
In sign of which with levis ay lasting
They be rewardid aftir ther degre,
Whose lusty grene may not appairid be,
But ay keping ther beauty fresh and grene,
For ther n'is no storme that may them deface,
Ne hail nor snowe, ne wind nor frostis kene,
Wherefore they have this propirty and grace;
And for the Flour within a litil space
Wollin be lost, so simple of nature
They be, that they no grevaunce may endure:

And every storme woll blowe them sone away,
Ne they lastè not but for a seson,
That is the cause [the very trouth to say]
That they may not by no way of reson
Be put to no such occupacion.
Madame, quod I, with all mine whole servise
I thank you now in my most humble wise;
For now I am ascertain'd thoroughly
Of every thing I desirid to knowe.
I am right glad that I have said, sothly,
Ought to your plesure, (if ye will me trow.)
Quod she ayen. But to whom do ye owe
Your service, and which wollin ye honour
[Pray tell me] this year, the Lefe or the Flour?
Madam, quod I, although I lest worthy,
Unto the Lefe I ow mine observaunce.
That is, quod she, right wel done certainly,
And I pray God to honour you advaunce,
And kepe you fro the wickid remembraunce
Of Melèbouch and all his cruiltie,
And all that gode and well-condition'd be;
For here I may no lengir now abide,
But I must follow the grete company
That ye may se yondir before you ride.
And forthwith, as I couth most humily
I toke my leve of her, and she gan hie
Aftir them as fast as evir she might,
And I drow homeward, for it was nigh night.
And put all that I had sene in writing,
Undir support of them that lust it rede.
O little boke! thou art so unconning,
How darst thou put thy self in prees for drede?
It is wondir that thou wexist not rede,
Sith that thou wost full lite who shall behold
Thy rude langage full boystously unfold.

THE

WIF OF BATHES TALE.

In olde days of the King Artour,
Of which that Bretons speken gret honour,
All was this lond fulfilled of Faerie;
The Elf quene with hire joly compagnie
Danced ful oft in many a grene mede,
This was the old opinion as I rede;
I speke of many hundred yeres ago,
But now can no man see non elves mo;
For now the grete charitee and prayeres
Of limitoures and other holy freres,
That serchen every land and every streme,
As thikke as motes in the sonne-beme,
Blissing halles, chambres, kichenes, and boures,
Citees and burghes, castles highe and toures,
Thropes and bernes, shepenes and dairies,
This maketh that ther ben no Faeries:
For ther as wont to walken was an elf,
Ther walketh now the limatour himself
In undermeles and in morweninges,
And sayth his matines and his holy thinges
As he goth in his limitatioun.
Women may now go safely up and doun,
In every bush, and under every tree,
Ther is non other Incubus but he,
And he ne will don hem no dishonour.

And so befell it that this King Artour
Had in his hous a lusty bacheler,
That on a day came riding fro river:
And happed that, alone as she was borne,
He saw a maiden walking him beforne,
Of which maid he anon, maugre hire hed,
By veray force beraft hire maidenhed:
For which oppression was swiche clamour,
And swiche pursuite unto the King Artour,
That damned was this knight for to be ded,
By cours of lawe, and shuld have lost his hed,
(Paraventure swiche was the statute tho)
But that the quene and other ladies mo
So longe praieden the king of grace,
Til he his lif him granted in the place,
And yaf him to the quene, all at hire will
To chese whether she wold him save or spill.
The quene thanketh the king with all hire might;
And after this thus spake she to the knight,
Whan that she saw hire time upon a day.
Thou standest yet (quod she) in swiche array,
That of thy lif yet hast thou not seuretee;
I grant thee lif if thou canst tellen me
What thing is it that women most desiren:
Beware, and kepe thy nekke bone from yren.
And if thou canst not tell it me anon,
Yet wol I yeve thee leve for to gon
A twelvemonth and a day to seke and lere
An answer suffisant in this matere;
And seuretee wol I have, or that thou pace,
The body for to yelden in this place.
Wo was the knight, and sorwefully he siketh:
But what? he may not don all as him liketh.
And at the last he chese him for to wende,
And come agen right at the yeres ende
With swiche answer as God wold him purvay,
And taketh his leve, and wendeth forth his way.
He seketh every hous and every place,
Wher as he hopeth for to finden grace,
To lerneu what thing women loven moste;
But he ne coude ariven in no coste,
Wher as he mighte find in this matere
Two creatures according in fere.
Som saiden women loven best richesse,
Som saiden honour, som saiden jolinesse,

Som riche arrây, some saiden lust a-bedde,
And oft time to be widewe and to be wedde.
Some saiden that we ben in herte most esed
Whan that we ben yflatered and ypreised.
He goth ful nigh the sothe, I wol not lie;
A man shal winne us best with flaterie;
And with attendance and with besinesse
Ben we ylimed bothe more and lesse.
And som men saiden, that we loven best
For to be free, and do right as us lest,
And that no man repreve us of our vice,
But say that we ben wise and nothing nice:
For trewely ther n'is non of us all,
If any wight wol claw us on the gall,
That we n'ill kike for that he saith us soth;
Assay, and he shal find it that so doth:
For be we never so vicious withinne,
We wol be holden wise and clene of sinne.
And som saiden, that gret delit han we
For to be holden stable and eke secre,
And in o purpos stedfastly to dwell,
And not bewreyen thing that men us tell;
But that tale is not worth a rake-stele.
Parde we women connen nothing hele,
Witnesse on Mida; wol ye here the Tale?
Ovide, amonges other thinges smale,
Said Mida had under his longe heres
Growing upon his hed two asses eres,
The whiche vice he hid, as he beste might,
Ful subtilly from every mannes sight,
That, save his wif, ther wist of it no mo;
He loved hire most, and trusted hire also;
He praied hire that to no creature
She n'olde tellen of his disfigure.
She swore him nay, for all the world to winne
She n'olde do that vilanie ne sinne,
To make hire husbond han so foule a name:
She n'olde not tell it for hire owen shame.
But natheles hire thoughte that she dide
That she so longe shulde a conseil hide;
Hire thought it swal so sore about hire herte,
That nedely som word hire must asterte;
And sith she dorst nat telle it to no man,
Doun to a mareis faste by she ran;
Til she came ther hire herte was a-fire;
And as a bitore bumbleth in the mire,

See the next two Leaves, after page 386.

He n'is not gentil, be he duk or erl,
For vilains sinful dedes make a cherl:
For gentillesse n'is but the renomee
Of thin auncestres for hir high bountee,
Which is a strange thing to thy persone:
Thy gentillesse cometh fro God alone;
Than cometh our veray gentillesse of grace;
It was no thing bequethed us with our place.
Thinketh how noble, as saith Valerius,
Was thilke Tullius Hostilius,
That out of poverte rose to high noblesse.
Redeth Senek, and redeth eke Boece,
Ther shull ye seen expresse that it no dred is
That he is gentil that doth gentil dedis:
And therefore, leve husbond, I thus conclude,
Al be it that min auncestres weren rude,
Yet may the highe God, and so hope I,
Granten me grace to liven vertuously;
Than am I gentil whan that I beginne
To liven vertuously and weiven sinne.
And ther as ye of poverte me repreve,
The highe God, on whom that we beleve,
In wilful poverte chese to lede his lif;
And certes every man, maiden, or wif,
May understond that Jesus heven king
Ne wold not chese a vicious living.
Glad poverte is an honest thing certain,
This wol Senek and other clerkes sain.
Who so that halt him paid of his poverte,
I hold him rich, al had he not a sherte.
He that coveiteth is a poure wight,
For he wold han that is not in his might;
But he that nought hath, ne coveiteth to have,
Is riche, although ye hold him but a knave.
Veray poverte is sinne proprely.
Juvenal saith of poverte merily,
The poure man whan he goth by the way,
Before the theves he may sing and play.
Poverte is hateful good; and, as I gesse,
A ful gret bringer out of besinesse;
A gret amender eke of sapience
To him that taketh it in patience.
Poverte is this, although it some elenge,
Possession that no wight wol challenge.
Poverte ful often, whan a man is low,
Maketh his God and eke himself to know.

Poverte a spectakel is, as thinketh me,
Thurgh which he may his veray frendes see.
And therefore, Sire, sin that I you not greve,
Of my poverte no more me repreve.
Now, Sire, of elde that ye repreven me:
And certes, Sire, though non auctoritee
Were in no book, ye gentiles of honour
Sain that men shuld an olde wight honour,
And clepe him Fader, for your gentillesse;
And auctours shal I finden, as I gesse.
Now ther ye sain that I am foule and old,
Than drede ye not to ben a cokewold;
For filthe, and elde also, so mote I the,
Ben grete wardeins upon chastitee.
But natheles, sin I know your delit,
I shal fulfill your worldly appetit.
Chese now (quod she) on of thise thinges twey,
To han me foule and old til that I dey,
And be to you a trewe humble wif,
And never you displese in all my lif;
Or elles wol ye han me yonge and faire,
And take your aventure of the repaire
That shal be to your hous because of me,
Or in some other place it may wel be?
Now chese yourselven whether that you liketh.
This knight aviseth him, and sore siketh,
But at the last he said in this manere:
My lady and my love, and wif so dere,
I put me in your wise governance,
Cheseth yourself which may be most plesance
And most honour to you and me also,
I do no force the whether of the two,
For as you liketh, it sufficeth me.
Than have I got the maisterie, quod she,
Sin I may chese and governe as me lest.
Ye certes, wif, quod he, I hold it best.
Kisse me, quod she, we be no lenger wrothe,
For by my trouth I wol be to you bothe,
This to sayn, ye bothe faire and good.
I pray to God that I mote sterven wood
But I to you be al so good and trewe
As ever was wif sin that the world was newe,
And but I be to-morwe as faire to seen
As any lady, emperice, or quene,
That is betwix the est and eke the west,
Doth with my lif and deth right as you lest.

Cast up the curtein, loke how that it is.
And whan the knight saw verraily all this,
That she so faire was, and so yonge therto,
For joye he hent hire in his armes two:
His herte bathed in a bath of blisse,
A thousand time a-row he gan hire kisse:
And she obeyed him in every thing
That mighte don him plesance or liking.
And thus they live unto hir lives ende
In parfit joye; and Jesu Crist us sende
Husbondes meke and yonge, and fresh a-bed,
And grace to overlive hem that we wed.
And eke I pray Jesus to short hir lives
That wol not be governed by hir wives;
And old and angry nigards of dispence
God send hem sone a veray pestilence.

TRANSLATIONS

FROM

OVID's EPISTLES.

TRANSLATIONS

from

OVID'S EPISTLES.

PREFACE

TO

THE TRANSLATION

OF

OVID'S EPISTLES. *

THE Life of Ovid being already written in our language, before the translation of his Metamorphoses, I will not presume so far upon myself, to think I can add any thing to Mr Sandys his undertaking. †

* Published in 8vo, in 1680. This version was made by several hands. See introductory remarks on Dryden's Translations. Johnson gives the following account of the purpose of Dryden's preface:

"In 1680, the epistles of Ovid being translated by the poets of the time, it was necessary (says Dr Johnson) to introduce them by a preface; and Dryden, who on such occasions was regularly summoned, prefixed a discourse upon translation, which was then struggling for the liberty it now enjoys. Why it should find any difficulty in breaking the shackles of verbal interpretation, which must for ever debar it from elegance, it would be difficult to conjecture, were not the power of prejudice every day observed. The authority of Jonson, Sandys, and Holiday, had fixed the judgement of the nation; and it was not easily believed that a better way could be found than they had taken, though Fanshaw, Denham, Waller, and Cowley, had tried to give examples of a different practice."

† George Sandys' Translation of Ovid was published in folio, in 1626.

The English reader may there be satisfied, that he flourished in the reign of Augustus Cæsar; that he was extracted from an ancient family of Roman knights; that he was born to the inheritance of a splendid fortune;* that he was designed to the study of the law, and had made considerable progress in it, before he quitted that profession, for this of poetry, to which he was more naturally formed. The cause of his banishment is unknown; because he was himself unwilling further to provoke the emperor, by ascribing it to any other reason than what was pretended by Augustus, which was, the lasciviousness of his Elegies, and his Art of Love.† It is true, they are not to be excused in the severity of manners, as being able to corrupt a larger empire, if there were any, than that of Rome; yet this may be said in behalf of Ovid, that no man has ever treated the passion of love with so much delicacy of thought, and of expression, or searched into the nature of it more philosophically than he. And the emperor, who condemned him, had as little reason as another man to punish that fault with so much severity, if at least he were the author of a certain epigram, which is ascribed to him, relating to the cause of the first civil war betwixt himself and Mark Antony the triumvir, which is more ful-

* Ovid was born in the year of Rome 711, and died in 771 of the same æra.

† The poet himself plainly intimates as much in an epistle to Fabius Maximus, where he represents himself as accusing Love of being the cause of his exile:

O puer! exilii, decepto causa magistro.

The deity replies to this charge, by alluding to the secret cause

some than any passage I have met with in our poet.* To pass by the naked familiarity of his expressions to Horace, which are cited in that author's life, I need only mention one notorious act of his, in taking Livia to his bed, when she was not only married, but with child by her husband then living. But deeds, it seems, may be justified by arbitrary power, when words are questioned in a poet. There is another guess of the grammarians, as far from truth as the first from reason; they will have him banished for some favours, which they say he received from Julia, the daughter of Augustus, whom they think he celebrates under the name of Corinna in his Elegies; but he, who will observe the verses which are made to that mistress, may gather from the whole contexture of them, that Corinna was not a woman of the highest quality. If Julia were then married to Agrippa, why should our poet make his petition to Isis for her safe delivery, and afterwards condole her miscarriage; which, for aught he knew, might be by her own husband? Or, indeed, how durst he be so bold to make the least discovery of such a crime, which was no less than capital, especially committed against a person of Agrippa's rank? Or, if it were before her marriage, he would surely have been more discreet, than to have published an accident which must have been fatal to them both. But what most confirms me against this opinion, is,

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of his banishment, for which the loosness of his verses furnished only an ostensible reason:

———*Juro*———
Nil nisi concessum nos te didicisse magistro,
Artibus et nullum crimen inesse tuis,
Utque hoc, sic utinam cetera defendere possis,
Scis aliud quod te læserit esse magis.

* Martial, lib. XI. epig. 21.

that Ovid himself complains, that the true person of Corinna was found out by the fame of his verses to her; which if it had been Julia, he durst not have owned; and, beside, an immediate punishment must have followed. He seems himself more truly to have touched at the cause of his exile in those obscure verses:

Cur aliquid vidi? cur noxia lumina feci?
Cur imprudenti cognita culpa mihi est?
Inscius Actæon vidit sine veste Dianam,
Præda fuit canibus non minus ille suis.

Namely, that he had either seen, or was conscious to somewhat, which had procured him his disgrace. But neither am I satisfied, that this was the incest of the emperor with his own daughter: for Augustus was of a nature too vindicative to have contented himself with so small a revenge, or so unsafe to himself, as that of simple banishment; but would certainly have secured his crimes from public notice, by the death of him who was witness to them. Neither have historians given us any sight into such an action of this emperor: nor would he, (the greatest politician of his time,) in all probability, have managed his crimes with so little secrecy, as not to shun the observation of any man. It seems more probable, that Ovid was either the confident of some other passion, or that he had stumbled, by some inadvertency, upon the privacies of Livia, and seen her in a bath: for the words

Sine veste Dianam,

agree better with Livia, who had the fame of chastity, than with either of the Julias, who were both noted of incontinency. The first verses, which were made by him in his youth, and recited publicly, according to the custom, were, as he himself assures us, to Corinna: his banishment happened not until

the age of fifty; from which it may be deduced, with probability enough, that the love of Corinna did not occasion it: nay, he tells us plainly, that his offence was that of error only, not of wickedness; and in the same paper of verses also, that the cause was notoriously known at Rome, though it be left so obscure to after-ages. *

But to leave conjectures on a subject so uncertain, † and to write somewhat more authentic of this poet. That he frequented the court of Augustus, and was well received in it, is most undoubted: all his poems bear the character of a court, and appear to be written, as the French call it, *cavaliere-ment:* add to this, that the titles of many of his elegies, and more of his letters in his banishment, are addressed to persons well known to us, even at this distance, to have been considerable in that court.

Nor was his acquaintance less with the famous poets of his age, than with the noblemen and ladies. He tells you himself, in a particular account of his own life, that Macer, Horace, Tibullus, ‡ Propertius, and many others of them, were his familiar friends, and that some of them communicated their writings to him; but that he had only seen Virgil.

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* *Causa meæ cunctis nimium quoque nota ruinæ,*
Indicio non est testificanda meo.

† This curious and obscure subject is minutely investigated by Bayle, who quotes and confutes the various opinions of the learned concerning this point of secret history; and concludes, like Dryden, by leaving it very much where he found it. Were I to hazard a conjecture, I should rather think, with our poet, Ovid had made some imprudent, and perhaps fortuitous discovery relating to Livia.

‡ Dryden speaks inaccurately, from a general recollection of the passage; for Ovid says distinctly, that the Fates did not give him

If the imitation of nature be the business of a poet, I know no author, who can justly be compared with ours, especially in the description of the passions. And, to prove this, I shall need no other judges than the generality of his readers: for, all passions being inborn with us, we are almost equally judges, when we are concerned in the representation of them. Now I will appeal to any man, who has read this poet, whether he finds not the natural emotion of the same passion in himself, which the poet describes in his feigned persons? His thoughts, which are the pictures and results of those passions, are generally such as naturally arise from those disorderly motions of our spirits. Yet, not to speak too partially in his behalf, I will confess, that the copiousness of his wit was such, that he often writ too pointedly for his subject, and made his persons speak more eloquently than the violence of their passion would admit: so that he is frequently witty out of season; leaving the imitation of nature, and the cooler dictates of his judgment, for the false applause of fancy. Yet he seems to have found out this imperfection in his riper age; for why else should he complain, that his Metamorphoses was left unfinished? Nothing sure can be added to the wit of that poem, or of the rest; but many things

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time to cultivate the acquaintance of Tibullus, any more than of Virgil. The entire passage runs thus:

Temporis illius colui, fovique poetas:
Quotque aderant vates, rebar adesse deos.
Sæpe suas volucres legit mihi grandior ævo,
Quæque nocet serpens, quæ juvat herba, Macer.
Sæpe suas solitus recitare Propertius ignes,
Jure sodalitii qui mihi junctus erat.
Ponticus Heroo, Battus quoque clarus Iambo,
Dulcia convictus membra fuere mei.
Et tenuit nostrus numerosus Horatius aures
Dum ferit Ausonid carmina culta lyrâ
Virgilium vidi tantum; nec avara Tibullo
Tempus amicitiæ fata dedêre meæ.

Trist. Lib. IV. Eleg. 9.

ought to have been retrenched, which I suppose would have been the business of his age, if his misfortunes had not come too fast upon him. But take him uncorrected, as he is transmitted to us, and it must be acknowledged, in spite of his Dutch friends, the commentators, even of Julius Scaliger himself, that Seneca's censure will stand good against him;

Nescivit quod bene cessit relinquere:

he never knew how to give over, when he had done well, but continually varying the same sense an hundred ways, and taking up in another place what he had more than enough inculcated before, he sometimes cloys his readers, instead of satisfying them; and gives occasion to his translators, who dare not cover him, to blush at the nakedness of their father. This, then, is the allay of Ovid's writings, which is sufficiently recompensed by his other excellencies: nay, this very fault is not without its beauties; for the most severe censor cannot but be pleased with the prodigality of his wit, though at the same time he could have wished that the master of it had been a better manager. Every thing which he does becomes him; and if sometimes he appears too gay, yet there is a secret gracefulness of youth, which accompanies his writings, though the staidness and sobriety of age be wanting. In the most material part, which is the conduct, it is certain, that he seldom has miscarried: for if his Elegies be compared with those of Tibullus and Propertius, his contemporaries it will be found, that those poets seldom designed before they writ; and though the language of Tibullus be more polished, and the learning of Propertius, especially in his fourth book, more set out to ostentation; yet their common practice was to look no further before them than the next line; whence it will inevitably follow, that they

can drive to no certain point, but ramble from one subject to another, and conclude with somewhat, which is not of a piece with their beginning:

Purpureus latè qui splendeat, unus et alter
Assuitur pannus,———

as Horace says; though the verses are golden, they are but patched into the garment. But our poet has always the goal in his eye, which directs him in his race; some beautiful design, which he first establishes, and then contrives the means, which will naturally conduct him to his end. This will be evident to judicious readers in his Epistles, of which somewhat, at least in general, will be expected.

The title of them in our late editions is *Epistolæ Heroidum*, the Letters of the Heroines. But Heinsius has judged more truly, that the inscription of our author was barely, Epistles; which he concludes from his cited verses, where Ovid asserts this work as his own invention, and not borrowed from the Greeks, whom (as the masters of their learning) the Romans usually did imitate. But it appears not from their writings, that any of the Grecians ever touched upon this way, which our poet therefore justly has vindicated to himself. I quarrel not at the word *Heroidum*, because it is used by Ovid in his Art of Love:

Jupiter ad veteres supplex Heroidas *ibat.*

But, sure, he could not be guilty of such an oversight, to call his work by the name of *Heroines*, when there are divers men, or heroes, as, namely, Paris, Leander, and Acontius, joined in it. Except Sabinus, who writ some answers to Ovid's Letters,

(*Quam celer è toto rediit meus orbe Sabinus,*)

I remember not any of the Romans, who have treat-

ed on this subject, save only Propertius, and that but once, in his Epistle of Arethusa to Lycotas, which is written so near the style of Ovid, that it seems to be but an imitation; and therefore ought not to defraud our poet of the glory of his invention.

Concerning the Epistles, I shall content myself to observe these few particulars: first, that they are generally granted to be the most perfect pieces of Ovid, and that the style of them is tenderly passionate and courtly; two properties well agreeing with the persons, which were heroines, and lovers. Yet, where the characters were lower, as in Œnone and Hero, he has kept close to nature, in drawing his images after a country life, though perhaps he has romanized his Grecian dames too much, and made them speak, sometimes, as if they had been born in the city of Rome, and under the empire of Augustus. There seems to be no great variety in the particular subjects which he has chosen; most of the Epistles being written from ladies, who were forsaken by their lovers: which is the reason that many of the same thoughts come back upon us in divers letters: but of the general character of women, which is modesty, he has taken a most becoming care; for his amorous expressions go no further than virtue may allow, and therefore may be read, as he intended them, by matrons without a blush.

Thus much concerning the poet: it remains that I should say somewhat of poetical translations in general, and give my opinion, (with submission to better judgments,) which way of version seems to be the most proper.

All translation, I suppose, may be reduced to these three heads.

First, that of metaphrase, or turning an author word by word, and line by line, from one language

into another. Thus, or near this manner, was Horace his Art of Poetry translated by Ben Jonson. The second way is that of paraphrase, or translation with latitude, where the author is kept in view by the translator, so as never to be lost, but his words are not so strictly followed as his sense; and that too is admitted to be amplified, but not altered. Such is Mr Waller's translation of Virgil's fourth Æneid. The third way is that of imitation, where the translator (if now he has not lost that name) assumes the liberty, not only to vary from the words and sense, but to forsake them both as he sees occasion; and, taking only some general hints from the original, to run divisions on the ground-work, as he pleases. Such is Mr Cowley's practice in turning two Odes of Pindar, and one of Horace, into English.

Concerning the first of these methods, our master Horace has given us this caution:

> *Nec verbum verbo curabis reddere, fidus*
> *Interpres*———
>
> Nor word for word too faithfully translate;

as the Earl of Roscommon has excellently rendered it. Too faithfully is, indeed, pedantically: it is a faith like that which proceeds from superstition, blind and zealous. Take it in the expression of Sir John Denham to Sir Richard Fanshaw, on his version of the Pastor Fido:

> That servile path thou nobly dost decline,
> Of tracing word by word, and line by line:
> A new and nobler way thou dost pursue,
> To make translations and translators too:
> They but preserve the ashes, thou the flame,
> True to his sense, but truer to his fame.

It is almost impossible to translate verbally, and

well, at the same time; for the Latin (a most severe and compendious language) often expresses that in one word, which either the barbarity, or the narrowness, of modern tongues cannot supply in more. It is frequent, also, that the conceit is couched in some expression, which will be lost in English:

Atque iidem venti vela fidemque ferent.

What poet of our nation is so happy as to express this thought literally in English, and to strike wit, or almost sense, out of it?

In short, the verbal copier is encumbered with so many difficulties at once, that he can never disentangle himself from all. He is to consider, at the same time, the thought of his author, and his words, and to find out the counterpart to each in another language; and, besides this, he is to confine himself to the compass of numbers, and the slavery of rhyme. It is much like dancing on ropes with fettered legs: a man may shun a fall by using caution; but the gracefulness of motion is not to be expected: and when we have said the best of it, it is but a foolish task; for no sober man would put himself into a danger for the applause of escaping without breaking his neck. We see Ben Jonson could not avoid obscurity in his literal translation of Horace, attempted in the same compass of lines: nay, Horace himself could scarce have done it to a Greek poet:

Brevis esse laboro, obscurus fio:

either perspicuity or gracefulness will frequently be wanting. Horace has indeed avoided both these rocks in his translation of the three first lines of Homer's Odyssey, which he has contracted into two:

Dic mihi, musa virum, captæ post tempora Trojæ,
Que mores hominum multorum vidit, et urbes.

Muse, speak the man, who, since the siege of Troy,
So many towns, such change of manners saw.
ROSCOMMON.

But then the sufferings of Ulysses, which are a considerable part of that sentence, are omitted:

Ὃς μάλα πολλὰ πλάγχθη.

The consideration of these difficulties, in a servile, literal translation, not long since made two of our famous wits, Sir John Denham,* † and Mr Cowley, to contrive another way of turning authors into our tongue, called, by the latter of them, imitation. As they were friends, I suppose they communicated their thoughts on this subject to each other; and therefore their reasons for it are little different, though the practice of one is much more moderate. I take imitation of an author, in their sense, to be an endeavour of a later poet to write

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* Sir John Denham gives his opinion on this subject in the preface to "The Destruction of Troy;" which he does not venture to call a translation, but "an Essay on the second book of Virgil's Æneis."—"I conceive it is a vulgar error, in translating poets, to affect being *fidus interpres;* let that care be with them who deal in matters of fact, or matters of faith; but whosoever aims at it in poetry, as he attempts what is not required, so he shall never perform what he attempts: for it is not his business alone to translate language into language, but poesy into poesy; and poesy is of so subtile a spirit, that in the pouring out of one language into another, it will all evaporate; and if a new spirit be not added in the transfusion, there will remain nothing but a *caput mortuum*, there being certain graces and happinesses peculiar to every language, which give life and energy to the words; and whosoever offers at verbal translation, shall have the misfortune of that young traveller, who lost his own language abroad, and brought home no other instead of it; for the grace of the Latin will be lost by being turned into English words, and the grace of the English by being turned into the Latin phrase."

like one, who has written before him, on the same subject; that is, not to translate his words, or to be confined to his sense, but only to set him as a pattern, and to write, as he supposes that author would have done, had he lived in our age, and in our country. Yet I dare not say, that either of them have carried this libertine way of rendering authors (as Mr Cowley calls it) so far as my definition reaches; for, in the Pindaric odes, the customs and ceremonies of ancient Greece are still preserved. But I know not what mischief may arise hereafter from the example of such an innovation, when writers of unequal parts to him shall imitate so bold an undertaking. To add and to diminish what we please, which is the way avowed by him, ought only to be granted to Mr Cowley, and that too only in his translation of Pindar; because he alone was able to make him amends, by giving him better of his own, whenever he refused his author's thoughts. Pindar is generally known to be a dark writer, to want connection, (I mean as to our understanding,) to soar out of sight, and leave his reader at a gaze. So wild and ungovernable a poet cannot be translated literally; his genius is too strong to bear a chain, and, Samson-like, he shakes it off. A genius so elevated and unconfined as Mr Cowley's, was but necessary to make Pindar speak English, and that was to be performed by no other way than imitation.* But if Virgil, or Ovid, or

* Cowley is now so undeservedly forgotten, that it is not superfluous to insert his own excellent account of the free mode of translation, prefixed to his translations from Pindar. "If a man should undertake to translate Pindar, word for word, it would be thought that one madman had translated another; as may appear, when he that understands not the original, reads the verbal traduction of him into Latin prose, than which nothing seems more raving. And sure rhyme, without the addition of wit, and the

any regular intelligible authors, be thus used, it is no longer to be called their work, when neither the thoughts nor words are drawn from the original;

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spirit of poetry, *(quod nequeo monstrare et sentio tantum,)* would but make it ten times more distracted than it is in prose. We must consider, in Pindar, the great difference of time betwixt his age and ours, which changes, as in pictures, at least the colours of poetry; the no less difference betwixt the religions and customs of our countries, and a thousand particularities of places, persons, and manners, which do but confusedly appear to our eyes at so great a distance; and, lastly, (which were enough, alone, for my purpose,) we must consider, that our ears are strangers to the music of his numbers, which sometimes, (especially in songs and odes,) almost without any thing else, makes an excellent poet. For though the grammarians and critics have laboured to reduce his verses into regular feet and measures, (as they have also those of the Greek and Latin comedies,) yet, in effect, they are little better than prose to our ears: and I would gladly know what applause our best pieces of English poesy could expect from a Frenchman or Italian, if converted faithfully, and word for word, into French or Italian prose. And when we have considered all this, we must needs confess, that after all these losses sustained by Pindar, all we can add to him by our wit and invention, (not deserting still his subject,) is not like to make him a richer man than he was in his own country. This is, in some measure, to be applied to all translations; and the not observing of it is the cause, that all which ever I yet saw are so much inferior to their originals. The like happens, too, in pictures, from the same root of exact imitation; which being a vile and unworthy kind of servitude, is incapable of producing any thing good or noble. I have seen originals, both in painting and poesy, much more beautiful than their natural objects; but I never saw a copy better than the original: which indeed cannot be otherwise; for men resolving in no case to shoot beyond the mark, it is a thousand to one if they shoot not short of it. It does not at all trouble me, that the grammarians, perhaps, will not suffer this libertine way of rendering foreign authors to be called translation; for I am not so much enamoured of the name translator, as not to wish rather to be something better, though it wants yet a name. I speak not so much all this in defence of my manner of translating or imitating, (or what other title they please,) the two ensuing odes of Pindar; for that would not deserve half these words, as by this occasion to rectify the opinion of divers men upon this matter."

but instead of them there is something new produced, which is almost the creation of another hand. By this way, it is true, somewhat that is excellent may be invented, perhaps more excellent than the first design; though Virgil must be still excepted, when that perhaps takes place. Yet he who is inquisitive to know an author's thoughts, will be disappointed in his expectation; and it is not always that a man will be contented to have a present made him, when he expects the payment of a debt. To state it fairly; imitation of an author is the most advantageous way for a translator to shew himself, but the greatest wrong which can be done to the memory and reputation of the dead. Sir John Denham (who advised more liberty than he took himself) gives his reason for his innovation, in his admirable preface before the translation of the second Æneid. "Poetry is of so subtile a spirit, that, in pouring out of one language into another, it will all evaporate; and, if a new spirit be not added in the transfusion, there will remain nothing but a *caput mortuum*." I confess this argument holds good against a literal translation; but who defends it? Imitation and verbal version are, in my opinion, the two extremes which ought to be avoided; and therefore, when I have proposed the mean betwixt them, it will be seen how far his argument will reach.

No man is capable of translating poetry, who, besides a genius to that art, is not a master both of his author's language, and of his own; nor must we understand the language only of the poet, but his particular turn of thoughts and expression, which are the characters that distinguish, and as it were individuate him from all other writers. When we are come thus far, it is time to look into ourselves,

to conform our genius to his, to give his thought either the same turn, if our tongue will bear it, or, if not, to vary but the dress, not to alter or destroy the substance. The like care must be taken of the more outward ornaments, the words. When they appear (which is but seldom) literally graceful, it were an injury to the author that they should be changed. But, since every language is so full of its own proprieties, that what is beautiful in one, is often barbarous, nay sometimes nonsense, in another, it would be unreasonable to limit a translator to the narrow compass of his author's words: it is enough if he choose out some expression which does not vitiate the sense. I suppose he may stretch his chain to such a latitude; but, by innovation of thoughts, methinks, he breaks it. By this means the spirit of an author may be transfused, and yet not lost: and thus it is plain, that the reason alledged by Sir John Denham has no farther force than to expression; for thought, if it be translated truly, cannot be lost in another language; but the words that convey it to our apprehension (which are the image and ornament of that thought,) may be so ill chosen, as to make it appear in an unhandsome dress, and rob it of its native lustre. There is, therefore, a liberty to be allowed for the expression; neither is it necessary that words and lines should be confined to the measure of their original. The sense of an author, generally speaking, is to be sacred and inviolable. If the fancy of Ovid be luxuriant, it is his character to be so; and if I retrench it, he is no longer Ovid. It will be replied, that he receives advantage by this lopping of his superfluous branches; but I rejoin, that a translator has no such right. When a painter copies from the life, I suppose he has no privilege to alter features, and lineaments, under pretence that his picture will

look better: perhaps the face, which he has drawn, would be more exact, if the eyes or nose were altered; but it is his business to make it resemble the original. In two cases only there may a seeming difficulty arise; that is, if the thought be notoriously trivial, or dishonest; but the same answer will serve for both, that then they ought not to be translated:

——— *Et quæ*
Desperes tractata nitescere posse, relinquas.

Thus I have ventured to give my opinion on this subject against the authority of two great men, but I hope without offence to either of their memories; for I both loved them living, and reverence them now they are dead. But if, after what I have urged, it be thought by better judges, that the praise of a translation consists in adding new beauties to the piece, thereby to recompense the loss which it sustains by change of language, I shall be willing to be taught better, and to recant. In the mean time, it seems to me, that the true reason why we have so few versions which are tolerable, is not from the too close pursuing of the author's sense, but because there are so few, who have all the talents which are requisite for translation, and that there is so little praise, and so small encouragement, for so considerable a part of learning.

CANACE TO MACAREUS.

EPIST. XI.

THE ARGUMENT.

Macareus and Canace, son and daughter to Æolus, God of the Winds, loved each other incestuously: Canace was delivered of a son, and committed him to her nurse, to be secretly conveyed away. The infant crying out, by that means was discovered to Æolus, who, enraged at the wickedness of his children, commanded the babe to be exposed to wild beasts on the mountains; and withal, sent a sword to Canace, with this message, That her crimes would instruct her how to use it. With this sword she slew herself; but before she died, she writ the following letter to her brother Macareus, who had taken sanctuary in the temple of Apollo.

If streaming blood my fatal letter stain,
Imagine, ere you read, the writer slain;
One hand the sword, and one the pen employs,
And in my lap the ready paper lies.
Think in this posture thou behold'st me write;
In this my cruel father would delight.
O! were he present, that his eyes and hands
Might see, and urge the death which he commands!
Than all the raging winds more dreadful, he,
Unmoved, without a tear, my wounds would see.

Jove justly placed him on a stormy throne,
His people's temper is so like his own.
The north and south, and each contending blast,
Are underneath his wide dominion cast:
Those he can rule; but his tempestuous mind
Is, like his airy kingdom, unconfined.
Ah! what avail my kindred Gods above,
That in their number I can reckon Jove!
What help will all my heavenly friends afford,
When to my breast I lift the pointed sword?
That hour, which joined us, came before its time;
In death we had been one without a crime.
Why did thy flames beyond a brother's move?
Why loved I thee with more than sister's love?
For I loved too; and, knowing not my wound,
A secret pleasure in thy kisses found;
My cheeks no longer did their colour boast,
My food grew loathsome, and my strength I lost:
Still ere I spoke, a sigh would stop my tongue;
Short were my slumbers, and my nights were long.
I knew not from my love these griefs did grow,
Yet was, alas! the thing I did not know.
My wily nurse, by long experience, found,
And first discovered to my soul its wound.
'Tis love, said she; and then my down-cast eyes,
And guilty dumbness, witnessed my surprise.
Forced at the last my shameful pain I tell;
And oh, what followed, we both know too well!
"When half denying, more than half content,
Embraces warmed me to a full consent,
Then with tumultuous joys my heart did beat,
And guilt, that made them anxious, made them great."*
But now my swelling womb heaved up my breast,
And rising weight my sinking limbs oppress.

* These lines are original.

What herbs, what plants, did not my nurse produce,
To make abortion by their powerful juice!
What medicines tried we not, to thee unknown!
Our first crime common; this was mine alone.
But the strong child, secure in his dark cell,
With nature's vigour did our arts repel.
And now the pale-faced empress of the night
Nine times had filled her orb with borrowed light;
Not knowing 'twas my labour, I complain
Of sudden shootings, and of grinding pain;
My throes came thicker, and my cries increased,
Which with her hand the conscious nurse suppressed.
To that unhappy fortune was I come,
Pain urged my clamours, but fear kept me dumb.
With inward struggling I restrained my cries,
And drunk the tears that trickled from my eyes.
Death was in sight, Lucina gave no aid,
And even my dying had my guilt betrayed.
Thou cam'st, and in thy countenance sat despair;
Rent were thy garments all, and torn thy hair;
Yet feigning comfort, which thou couldst not give,
Prest in thy arms, and whispering me to live;
For both our sakes, saidst thou, preserve thy life;
Live, my dear sister, and my dearer wife.
Raised by that name, with my last pangs I strove;
Such power have words, when spoke by those we love.
The babe, as if he heard what thou hadst sworn,
With hasty joy sprung forward to be born.
What helps it to have weathered out one storm!
Fear of our father does another form.
High in his hall, rocked in a chair of state,
The king with his tempestuous council sate;
Through this large room our only passage lay,
By which we could the new-born babe convey.
Swathed in her lap, the bold nurse bore him out,
With olive branches covered round about;

And, muttering prayers, as holy rites she meant,
Through the divided crowd unquestioned went.
Just at the door the unhappy infant cried;
The grandsire heard him, and the theft he spied.
Swift as a whirlwind to the nurse he flies,
And deafs his stormy subjects with his cries.
With one fierce puff he blows the leaves away;
Exposed the self-discovered infant lay.
The noise reached me, and my presaging mind
Too soon its own approaching woes divined.
Not ships at sea with winds are shaken more,
Nor seas themselves, when angry tempests roar,
Than I, when my loud father's voice I hear;
The bed beneath me trembled with my fear.
He rushed upon me, and divulged my stain;
Scarce from my murder could his hands refrain.
I only answered him with silent tears;
They flowed; my tongue was frozen up with fears.
His little grandchild he commands away,
To mountain wolves and every bird of prey.
The babe cried out, as if he understood,
And begged his pardon with what voice he could.
By what expressions can my grief be shown?
Yet you may guess my anguish by your own,
To see my bowels, and, what yet was worse,
Your bowels too, condemned to such a curse!
Out went the king; my voice its freedom found,
My breasts I beat, my blubbered cheeks I wound.
And now appeared the messenger of death;
Sad were his looks, and scarce he drew his breath,
To say, "Your father sends you"—(with that word
His trembling hands presented me a sword;)
"Your father sends you this; and lets you know,
That your own crimes the use of it will show."
Too well I know the sense those words impart;
His present shall be treasured in my heart.

Are these the nuptial gifts a bride receives?
And this the fatal dower a father gives?
Thou God of marriage, shun thy own disgrace,
And take thy torch from this detested place!
Instead of that, let furies light their brands,
And fire my pile with their infernal hands!
With happier fortune may my sisters wed,
Warned by the dire example of the dead.
For thee, poor babe, what crime could they pretend?
How could thy infant innocence offend?
A guilt there was; but, oh, that guilt was mine!
Thou suffer'st for a sin that was not thine.
Thy mother's grief and crime! but just enjoyed,
Shewn to my sight, and born to be destroyed!
Unhappy offspring of my teeming womb!
Dragged headlong from thy cradle to thy tomb!
Thy unoffending life I could not save,
Nor weeping could I follow to thy grave;
Nor on thy tomb could offer my shorn hair,
Nor shew the grief which tender mothers bear.
Yet long thou shalt not from my arms be lost;
For soon I will o'ertake thy infant ghost.
But thou, my love, and now my love's despair,
Perform his funerals with paternal care;
His scattered limbs with my dead body burn,
And once more join us in the pious urn.
If on my wounded breast thou droppest a tear,
Think for whose sake my breast that wound did bear;
And faithfully my last desires fulfil,
As I perform my cruel father's will.

HELEN TO PARIS.

EPIST. XVII.*

THE ARGUMENT.

Helen, having received an epistle from Paris, returns the following answer; wherein she seems at first to chide him for his presumption in writing as he had done, which could only proceed from his low opinion of her virtue; then owns herself to be sensible of the passion which he had expressed for her, though she much suspected his constancy; and at last discovers her inclination to be favourable to him; the whole letter shewing the extreme artifice of womankind.

WHEN loose epistles violate chaste eyes,
She half consents, who silently denies.
How dares a stranger, with designs so vain,
Marriage and hospitable rights prophane?
Was it for this, your fleet did shelter find
From swelling seas, and every faithless wind?
For though a distant country brought you forth,
Your usage here was equal to your worth.
Does this deserve to be rewarded so?
Did you come here a stranger, or a foe?

* This epistle was partly translated by Lord Mulgrave.

Your partial judgment may perhaps complain,
And think me barbarous for my just disdain;
Ill-bred then let me be, but not unchaste,
Nor my clear fame with any spot defaced.
Though in my face there's no affected frown,
Nor in my carriage a feigned niceness shown,
I keep my honour still without a stain,
Nor has my love made any coxcomb vain.
Your boldness I with admiration see;
What hope had you to gain a queen like me?
Because a hero forced me once away,
Am I thought fit to be a second prey?
Had I been won, I had deserved your blame,
But sure my part was nothing but the shame.
Yet the base theft to him no fruit did bear,
I 'scaped unhurt by any thing but fear.
Rude force might some unwilling kisses gain;
But that was all he ever could obtain.
You on such terms would ne'er have let me go;
Were he like you, we had not parted so.
Untouched the youth restored me to my friends,
And modest usage made me some amends.
'Tis virtue to repent a vicious deed;
Did he repent, that Paris might succeed?
Sure 'tis some fate that sets me above wrongs,
Yet still exposes me to busy tongues.
I'll not complain; for who's displeased with love,
If it sincere, discreet, and constant prove?
But that I fear; not that I think you base,
Or doubt the blooming beauties of my face;
But all your sex is subject to deceive,
And ours, alas! too willing to believe.
Yet others yield; and love o'ercomes the best;
But why should I not shine above the rest?
Fair Leda's story seems at first to be
A fit example, ready formed for me.

But she was cozened by a borrowed shape,
And under harmless feathers felt a rape.
If I should yield, what reason could I use?
By what mistake the loving crime excuse?
Her fault was in her powerful lover lost;
But of what Jupiter have I to boast?
Though you to heroes and to kings succeed,
Our famous race does no addition need;
And great alliances but useless prove,
To one that comes herself from mighty Jove.
Go then, and boast, in some less haughty place,
Your Phrygian blood, and Priam's ancient race;
Which I would shew I valued, if I durst;
You are the fifth from Jove, but I the first.
The crown of Troy is powerful, I confess;
But I have reason to think ours no less.
Your letter, filled with promises of all
That men can good, and women pleasant call,
Gives expectation such an ample field,
As would move goddesses themselves to yield.
But if I e'er offend great Juno's laws,
Yourself shall be the dear, the only cause;
Either my honour I'll to death maintain,
Or follow you, without mean thoughts of gain.
Not that so fair a present I despise;
We like the gift, when we the giver prize:
But 'tis your love moves me, which made you take
Such pains, and run such hazards for my sake.
I have perceived, though I dissembled too,
A thousand things that love has made you do.
Your eager eyes would almost dazzle mine,
In which, wild man, your wanton thoughts would shine.
Sometimes you'd sigh, sometimes disordered stand,
And with unusual ardour press my hand;
Contrive just after me to take the glass,
Nor would you let the least occasion pass;

When oft I feared, I did not mind alone,
And blushing sate for things which you have done;
Then murmured to myself,—he'll for my sake
Do any thing;—I hope 'twas no mistake.
Oft have I read within this pleasing grove,
Under my name, those charming words,—I love.
I, frowning, seemed not to believe your flame;
But now, alas! am come to write the same.
If I were capable to do amiss,
I could not but be sensible of this.
For oh! your face has such peculiar charms,
That who can hold from flying to your arms!
But what I ne'er can have without offence,
May some blest maid possess with innocence.
Pleasure may tempt, but virtue more should move;
O learn of me to want the thing you love.
What you desire is sought by all mankind;
As you have eyes, so others are not blind.
Like you they see, like you my charms adore;
They wish not less, but you dare venture more.
Oh! had you then upon our coasts been brought,
My virgin-love when thousand rivals sought,
You had I seen, you should have had my voice,
Nor could my husband justly blame my choice.
For both our hopes, alas! you come too late;
Another now is master of my fate.
More to my wish I could have lived with you,
And yet my present lot can undergo.
Cease to solicit a weak woman's will,
And urge not her you love to so much ill;
But let me live contented as I may,
And make not my unspotted fame your prey.
Some right you claim, since naked to your eyes
Three goddesses disputed beauty's prize;
One offered valour, t'other crowns; but she
Obtained her cause, who, smiling, promised me.

But first I am not of belief so light,
To think such nymphs would shew you such a sight;
Yet granting this, the other part is feigned;
A bribe so mean your sentence had not gained.
With partial eyes I should myself regard,
To think that Venus made me her reward.
I humbly am content with human praise;
A Goddess's applause would envy raise.
But be it as you say; for, 'tis confest,
The men, who flatter highest, please us best.
That I suspect it, ought not to displease;
For miracles are not believed with ease.
One joy I have, that I had Venus' voice;
A greater yet, that you confirmed her choice;
That proffered laurels, promised sovereignty,
Juno and Pallas, you contemned for me.
Am I your empire, then, and your renown?
What heart of rock, but must by this be won?
And yet bear witness, O you Powers above,
How rude I am in all the arts of love!
My hand is yet untaught to write to men;
This is the essay of my unpractised pen.
Happy those nymphs, whom use has perfect made!
I think all crime, and tremble at a shade.
E'en while I write, my fearful conscious eyes
Look often back, misdoubting a surprise.
For now the rumour spreads among the crowd,
At court in whispers, but in town aloud.
Dissemble you, whate'er you hear them say;
To leave off loving were your better way;
Yet if you will dissemble it, you may.
Love secretly; the absence of my lord
More freedom gives, but does not all afford;
Long is his journey, long will be his stay,
Called by affairs of consequence away.
To go, or not, when unresolved he stood,
I bid him make what swift return he could;

Then kissing me, he said, I recommend
All to thy care, but most my Trojan friend.
I smiled at what he innocently said,
And only answered, " You shall be obeyed."
Propitious winds have borne him far from hence,
But let not this secure your confidence.
Absent he is, yet absent he commands;
You know the proverb, " Princes have long hands."
My fame's my burden; for the more I'm praised,
A juster ground of jealousy is raised.
Were I less fair, I might have been more blest;
Great beauty through great danger is possest.
To leave me here his venture was not hard,
Because he thought my virtue was my guard.
He feared my face, but trusted to my life;
The beauty doubted, but believed the wife.
You bid me use the occasion while I can,
Put in our hands by the good easy man.
I would, and yet I doubt, 'twixt love and fear;
One draws me from you, and one brings me near.
Our flames are mutual, and my husband's gone;
The nights are long; I fear to lie alone.
One house contains us, and weak walls divide,
And you're too pressing to be long denied.
Let me not live, but every thing conspires
To join our loves, and yet my fear retires.
You court with words, when you should force employ;
A rape is requisite to shame-faced joy.
Indulgent to the wrongs which we receive,
Our sex can suffer what we dare not give.—
What have I said? for both of us 'twere best,
Our kindling fire if each of us supprest.
The faith of strangers is too prone to change,
And, like themselves, their wandering passions range.

Hypsipile, and the fond Minonian * maid,
Were both by trusting of their guests betrayed.
How can I doubt that other men deceive,
When you yourself did fair Œnone † leave?
But lest I should upbraid your treachery,
You make a merit of that crime to me.
Yet grant you were to faithful love inclined,
Your weary Trojans wait but for a wind;
Should you prevail, while I assign the night,
Your sails are hoisted, and you take your flight;
Some bawling mariner our love destroys,
And breaks asunder our unfinished joys.
But I with you may leave the Spartan port,
To view the Trojan wealth and Priam's court;
Shown while I see, I shall expose my fame,
And fill a foreign country with my shame.
In Asia what reception shall I find?
And what dishonour leave in Greece behind?
What will your brothers, Priam, Hecuba,
And what will all your modest matrons say?
E'en you, when on this action you reflect,
My future conduct justly may suspect;
And whate'er stranger lands upon your coast,
Conclude me, by your own example, lost.
I from your rage a strumpet's name shall hear,
While you forget what part in it you bear.
You, my crime's author, will my crime upbraid;—
Deep under ground, oh, let me first be laid!
You boast the pomp and plenty of your land,
And promise all shall be at my command;

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* Ariadne.

† A Phrygian nymph, seduced and deserted by Paris before his Spartan expedition.

Your Trojan wealth, believe me, I despise;
My own poor native land has dearer ties.
Should I be injured on your Phrygian shore,
What help of kindred could I there implore?
Medea was by Jason's flattery won;
I may, like her, believe, and be undone.
Plain honest hearts, like mine, suspect no cheat,
And love contributes to its own deceit;
The ships, about whose sides loud tempests roar,
With gentle winds were wafted from the shore.
Your teeming mother dreamed, a flaming brand,
Sprung from her womb, consumed the Trojan land;
To second this, old prophecies conspire,
That Ilium shall be burnt with Grecian fire:
Both give me fear; nor is it much allayed,
That Venus is obliged our loves to aid.
For they, who lost their cause, revenge will take;
And for one friend two enemies you make.
Nor can I doubt, but, should I follow you,
The sword would soon our fatal crime pursue.
A wrong so great my husband's rage would rouse,
And my relations would his cause espouse.
You boast your strength and courage; but, alas!
Your words receive small credit from your face.
Let heroes in the dusty field delight,
Those limbs were fashioned for another fight.
Bid Hector sally from the walls of Troy;
A sweeter quarrel should your arms employ.
Yet fears like these should not my mind perplex,
Were I as wise as many of my sex;
But time and you may bolder thoughts inspire,
And I, perhaps, may yield to your desire.
You last demand a private conference;
These are your words, but I can guess your sense.
Your unripe hopes their harvest must attend;
Be ruled by me, and time may be your friend.

This is enough to let you understand;
For now my pen has tired my tender hand.
My woman knows the secret of my heart,
And may hereafter better news impart.

DIDO TO ÆNEAS.

EPIST. VII.

THE ARGUMENT.

Æneas, the son of Venus and Anchises, having, at the destruction of Troy, saved his Gods, his father, and son Ascanius, from the fire, put to sea with twenty sail of ships; and, having been long tost with tempests, was at last cast upon the shore of Libya, where queen Dido (flying from the cruelty of Pygmalion, her brother, who had killed her husband Sichæus) had lately built Carthage. She entertained Æneas and his fleet with great civility, fell passionately in love with him, and in the end denied him not the last favours. But Mercury admonishing Æneas to go in search of Italy, (a kingdom promised him by the Gods,) he readily prepared to follow him. Dido soon perceived it, and, having in vain tried all other means to engage him to stay, at last, in despair, writes to him as follows:

So, on Mæander's banks, when death is nigh,
The mournful swan sings her own elegy.
Not that I hope (for, oh, that hope were vain!)
By words your lost affection to regain;
But, having lost whate'er was worth my care,
Why should I fear to lose a dying prayer?
'Tis then resolved poor Dido must be left,
Of life, of honour, and of love bereft!

While you, with loosened sails, and vows, prepare
To seek a land that flies the searcher's care;
Nor can my rising towers your flight restrain,
Nor my new empire, offered you in vain.
Built walls you shun, unbuilt you seek; that land
Is yet to conquer, but you this command.
Suppose you landed where your wish designed,
Think what reception foreigners would find.
What people is so void of common sense,
To vote succession from a native prince?
Yet there new sceptres and new loves you seek,
New vows to plight, and plighted vows to break.
When will your towers the height of Carthage know?
Or when your eyes discern such crowds below?
If such a town and subjects you could see,
Still would you want a wife who loved like me.
For, oh, I burn, like fires with incense bright;
Not holy tapers flame with purer light.
Æneas is my thoughts' perpetual theme,
Their daily longing, and their nightly dream.
Yet he's ungrateful and obdurate still;
Fool that I am to place my heart so ill!
Myself I cannot to myself restore;
Still I complain, and still I love him more.
Have pity, Cupid, on my bleeding heart,
And pierce thy brother's with an equal dart.
I rave; nor canst thou Venus' offspring be,
Love's mother could not bear a son like thee.
From hardened oak, or from a rock's cold womb,
At least thou art from some fierce tigress come;
Or on rough seas, from their foundation torn,
Got by the winds, and in a tempest born:
Like that, which now thy trembling sailors fear;
Like that, whose rage should still detain thee here.
Behold how high the foamy billows ride!
The winds and waves are on the juster side.

To winter weather, and a stormy sea,
I'll owe what rather I would owe to thee.
Death thou deserv'st from heaven's avenging laws;
But I'm unwilling to become the cause.
To shun my love, if thou wilt seek thy fate,
'Tis a dear purchase, and a costly hate.
Stay but a little, till the tempest cease,
And the loud winds are lulled into a peace.
May all thy rage, like theirs, inconstant prove!
And so it will, if there be power in love.
Know'st thou not yet what dangers ships sustain?
So often wrecked, how darest thou tempt the main?
Which were it smooth, were every wave asleep,
Ten thousand forms of death are in the deep.
In that abyss the gods their vengeance store,
For broken vows of those who falsely swore;
There winged storms on sea-born Venus wait,
To vindicate the justice of her state.
Thus I to thee the means of safety show;
And, lost myself, would still preserve my foe.
False as thou art, I not thy death design;
O rather live, to be the cause of mine!
Should some avenging storm thy vessel tear,
(But heaven forbid my words should omen bear!)
Then in thy face thy perjured vows would fly,
And my wronged ghost be present to thy eye;
With threatening looks think thou behold'st me stare,
Gasping my mouth, and clotted all my hair.
Then, should forked lightning and red thunder fall,
What couldst thou say, but, I deserved them all?
Lest this should happen, make not haste away;
To shun the danger will be worth thy stay.
Have pity on thy son, if not on me;
My death alone is guilt enough for thee.
What has his youth, what have thy gods deserved,
To sink in seas, who were from fires preserved?

But neither gods nor parent didst thou bear;
Smooth stories all, to please a woman's ear,
False as the tale of thy romantic life.
Nor yet am I thy first-deluded wife;
Left to pursuing foes Creusa stayed,
By thee, base man, forsaken and betrayed.
This, when thou told'st me, struck my tender heart,*
That such requital followed such desert.
Nor doubt I but the gods, for crimes like these,
Seven winters kept thee wandering on the seas.
Thy starved companions, cast ashore, I fed,
Thyself admitted to my crown and bed.
To harbour strangers, succour the distrest,
Was kind enough; but, oh, too kind the rest!
Curst be the cave which first my ruin brought,
Where, from the storm, we common shelter sought!
A dreadful howling echoed round the place;
The mountain nymphs, thought I, my nuptials grace.
I thought so then, but now too late I know
The furies yelled my funerals from below.
O chastity and violated fame,
Exact your dues to my dead husband's name!
By death redeem my reputation lost,
And to his arms restore my guilty ghost!
Close by my palace, in a gloomy grove,
Is raised a chapel to my murdered love;
There, wreathed with boughs and wool, his statue stands,
The pious monument of artful hands.

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* Dryden here misinterprets his author:

Hæc mihi narrâras, nec me movere———

The line would have run more justly thus:

This struck not, while thou told'st, my tender heart.

Last night, methought, he called me from the dome,
And thrice, with hollow voice, cried, Dido, come!—
She comes; thy wife thy lawful summons hears,
But comes more slowly, clogged with conscious fears.
Forgive the wrong I offered to thy bed;
Strong were his charms, who my weak faith misled.
His goddess mother, and his aged sire
Borne on his back, did to my fall conspire.
Oh! such he was, and is, that, were he true,
Without a blush I might his love pursue;
But cruel stars my birth-day did attend,
And, as my fortune opened, it must end.
My plighted lord was at the altar slain,
Whose wealth was made my bloody brother's gain;
Friendless, and followed by the murderer's hate,
To foreign countries I removed my fate;
And here, a suppliant, from the natives' hands
I bought the ground on which my city stands,
With all the coast that stretches to the sea,
E'en to the friendly port that sheltered thee;
Then raised these walls, which mount into the air,
At once my neighbours' wonder, and their fear.
For now they arm; and round me leagues are made,
My scarce established empire to invade.
To man my new-built walls I must prepare,
An helpless woman, and unskilled in war.
Yet thousand rivals to my love pretend,
And for my person would my crown defend;
Whose jarring votes in one complaint agree,
That each unjustly is disdained foi thee.
To proud Hyarbas give me up a prey,
For that must follow, if thou goest away;
Or to my husband's murderer leave my life,
That to the husband he may add the wife.
Go then, since no complaints can move thy mind;
Go, perjured man, but leave thy gods behind.

Touch not those gods, by whom thou art forsworn,
Who will in impious hands no more be borne;
Thy sacrilegious worship they disdain,
And rather would the Grecian fires sustain.
Perhaps my greatest shame is still to come,
And part of thee lies hid within my womb;
The babe unborn must perish by thy hate,
And perish, guiltless, in his mother's fate.
Some god, thou sayest, thy voyage does command;
Would the same god had barred thee from my land!
The same, I doubt not, thy departure steers,
Who kept thee out at sea so many years;
While thy long labours were a price so great,
As thou, to purchase Troy, would'st not repeat.
But Tyber now thou seek'st, to be at best,
When there arrived, a poor precarious guest.
Yet it deludes thy search; perhaps it will
To thy old age lie undiscovered still.
A ready crown and wealth in dower I bring,
And, without conquering, here thou art a king.
Here thou to Carthage may'st transfer thy Troy;
Here young Ascanius may his arms employ;
And, while we live secure in soft repose,
Bring many laurels home from conquered foes.
By Cupid's arrows, I adjure thee stay!
By all the gods, companions of thy way!
So may thy Trojans, who are yet alive,
Live still, and with no future fortune strive;
So may thy youthful son old age attain,
And thy dead father's bones in peace remain;
As thou hast pity on unhappy me,
Who knew no crime, but too much love of thee.
I am not born from fierce Achilles' line,
Nor did my parents against Troy combine.
To be thy wife if I unworthy prove,
By some inferior name admit my love.

To be secured of still possessing thee,
What would I do, and what would I not be!
Our Libyan coasts their certain seasons know,
When, free from tempests, passengers may go;
But now with northern blasts the billows roar,
And drive the floating sea-weed to the shore.
Leave to my care the time to sail away;
When safe, I will not suffer thee to stay.
Thy weary men would be with ease content;
Their sails are tattered, and their masts are spent.
If by no merit I thy mind can move,
What thou deniest my merit, give my love.
Stay, till I learn my loss to undergo,
And give me time to struggle with my woe:
If not, know this, I will not suffer long;
My life's too loathsome, and my love too strong.
Death holds my pen, and dictates what I say,
While cross my lap the Trojan sword I lay.
My tears flow down; the sharp edge cuts their flood,
And drinks my sorrows, that must drink my blood.
How well thy gift does with my fate agree!
My funeral pomp is cheaply made by thee.
To no new wounds my bosom I display;
The sword but enters where love made the way.
But thou, dear sister, and yet dearer friend,
Shalt my cold ashes to their urn attend.
Sichæus' wife let not the marble boast;
I lost that title, when my fame I lost.
This short inscription only let it bear;
"Unhappy Dido lies in quiet here.
"The cause of death, and sword by which she died,
"Æneas gave; the rest her arm supplied."

TRANSLATIONS

FROM

OVID'S METAMORPHOSES.

DEDICATION

PREFIXED TO THE

TRANSLATIONS FROM OVID's METAMORPHOSES.

This Dedication contains abundance of literary and political controversy. The first heat of the Revolution had been long over, and the losers began to assume the privilege of talking, without fear that an established government would think their complaints worthy of much notice. Dryden, whom the evils of degradation and poverty pressed severely, was not of a temper to remain silent under them, as soon as he conceived it safe to utter his grievances. In losing his places of laureat and historiographer, there was not only dishonour, but great pecuniary loss; nor was it at all a soothing addition, that his old enemy Shadwell had obtained the one, and his equivocal friend Rymer the other, of his appointments. He sets out in extremely bad humour with the government, under which he had suffered this deprivation; with those who had risen by his fall; and with himself, for having cultivated the barren field of poetry, instead of aspiring to the honours of the gown. At length, after having ventured probably as far as he thought safe, certainly as far as to excite displeasure, in flourishes of declamation, which, though expressed against ministers in general, are obviously levelled against those of the day, he turns short, and falls with great vehemence upon the whole body of critics, ancient and modern, as the natural enemies of poets and poetry. Descending to those of his own day, he singles out Rymer, who, in a piece, called, "A short View of Tragedy," published in 1692, had depreciated the modern drama in his deep admiration of the ancients. The controversy concerning the comparative merits of the ancients and moderns was now raging in the literary world. Perault had written his "Parallel," and Sir William Temple his "Essay on Ancient and Modern Learning." Wotton's "Reflections" were published in 1694, and these led the way to Swift's "Battle of the Books," in which our author is treated with great severity.

Rymer had not only espoused the cause of the ancient tragedians in the general dispute, but, as Dryden complains, had treat-

ed him slightly; and our bard was not famous for patience under such offences. He therefore retorts in this Dedication, maliciously upbraids Rymer with the fate of his fallen tragedy "Edgar;" and artfully divides the comparison between the Grecian and British dramatists, from that which Perault had instituted between the ancient poets in general and those of modern France. Our author's good taste, as well as policy, led him to take a distinction so necessary for the maintenance of his cause. Having bestowed what he thought an adequate chastisement upon Rymer, he employs the small remainder of the preface in discussing a few miscellaneous points of criticism, chiefly relating to translation.

The tone of this Dedication excited, as Dryden himself informs us, the resentment of the court, who employed Rymer to attack our author's dramatic reputation; a task which he never accomplished. *

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* See his letter to Tonson, in which he thus expresses himself: "About a fortnight ago, I had an intimation from a friend, by letter, that one of the secretaries, I suppose Trenchard, had informed the queen, that I had abused her government, (these were his words,) in my epistle to Lord Radcliffe; and that thereupon she had commanded her historiographer to fall upon my plays, which he assures me he is now doing. I doubt not his malice, from a former hint you gave me; and if he be employed, I am confident 'tis of his own seeking, who, you know, *has spoken slightly of me in his last critique, and that gave me occasion to snarl again.*"

DEDICATION

OF

THE THIRD MISCELLANY, 1693,

CONTAINING

TRANSLATIONS FROM OVID'S METAMORPHOSES.

TO

THE RIGHT HONOURABLE

LORD RADCLIFFE. †

MY LORD,

THESE Miscellany Poems are by many titles yours. The first they claim, from your acceptance of my promise to present them to you, before some of them were yet in being. The rest are derived from your own merit, the exactness of your judgment in poetry, and the candour of your nature; easy to forgive some trivial faults, when they come accompanied with countervailing beauties. But, after all,

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† Lord Radcliffe was the eldest son of Francis, Earl of Derwentwater, by Catherine, daughter of Sir William Fenwick. He married Mary Tudor, a natural daughter of Charles II., by Mary Davies, an actress, who had the fortune to attract his majesty's attention, by singing in D'Avenant's "Rivals," the famous mad song,

My lodging is on the cold ground.

Lord Radcliffe succeeded to his father in 1696-7, and died 29th April, 1705.

though these are your equitable claims to a dedication from other poets, yet I must acknowledge a bribe in the case, which is your particular liking of my verses. It is a vanity common to all writers, to overvalue their own productions; and it is better for me to own this failing in myself, than the world to do it for me. For what other reason have I spent my life in so unprofitable a study? why am I grown old, in seeking so barren a reward as fame? The same parts and application, which have made me a poet, might have raised me to any honours of the gown, which are often given to men of as little learning and less honesty than myself. No government has ever been, or ever can be, wherein time-servers and blockheads will not be uppermost. The persons are only changed, but the same jugglings in state, the same hypocrisy in religion, the same self-interest and mismanagement, will remain for ever. Blood and money will be lavished in all ages, only for the preferment of new faces, with old consciences. There is too often a jaundice in the eyes of great men; they see not those whom they raise in the same colours with other men. All whom they affect look golden to them, when the gilding is only in their own distempered sight. These considerations have given me a kind of contempt for those who have risen by unworthy ways. I am not ashamed to be little, when I see them so infamously great; neither do I know why the name of poet should be dishonourable to me, if I am truly one, as I hope I am; for I will never do any thing that shall dishonour it. The notions of morality are known to all men; none can pretend ignorance of those ideas which are in-born in mankind; and if I see one thing, and practise the contrary, I must be disingenuous not to acknowledge a clear truth, and base to act against the light of my own conscience. For the reputation of my honesty, no

man can question it, who has any of his own; for that of my poetry, it shall either stand by its own merit, or fall for want of it. Ill writers are usually the sharpest censors; for they, as the best poet and the best patron said,

> When in the full perfection of decay,
> Turn vinegar, and come again in play.*

Thus the corruption of a poet is the generation of a critic; I mean of a critic in the general acceptation of this age; for formerly they were quite another species of men. They were defenders of poets, and commentators on their works;—to illustrate obscure beauties; to place some passages in a better light; to redeem others from malicious interpretations; to help out an author's modesty, who is not ostentatious of his wit; and, in short, to shield him from the ill-nature of those fellows, who were then called Zoili and Momi, and now take upon themselves the venerable name of censors. But neither Zoilus, nor he who endeavoured to defame Virgil, were ever adopted into the name of critics by the ancients. What their reputation was then, we know; and their successors in this age deserve no better. Are our auxiliary forces turned our enemies? are they, who at best are but wits of the second order, and whose only credit amongst readers is what they obtained by being subservient to the fame of writers, are these become rebels, of slaves, and usurpers, of subjects? or, to speak in the most honourable terms

* These lines are quoted from Lord Dorset's address "to Mr Edward Howard, on his incomparable, incomprehensible poem, called, The British Princes:"

> Wit, like tierce claret, when it 'gins to pall,
> Neglected lies, and's of no use at all;
> But, in its full perfection of decay,
> Turns vinegar, and comes again in play.

of them, are they, from our seconds, become principals against us? Does the ivy undermine the oak, which supports its weakness? What labour would it cost them to put in a better line, than the worst of those which they expunge in a true poet? Petronius, the greatest wit perhaps of all the Romans, yet when his envy prevailed upon his judgment to fall on Lucan, he fell himself in his attempt; he performed worse in his "Essay of the Civil War" than the author of the "Pharsalia;" and, avoiding his errors, has made greater of his own. Julius Scaliger would needs turn down Homer, and abdicate him after the possession of three thousand years: has he succeeded in his attempt? he has indeed shown us some of those imperfections in him, which are incident to human kind; but who had not rather be that Homer than this Scaliger? You see the same hypercritic, when he endeavours to mend the beginning of Claudian, (a faulty poet, and living in a barbarous age,) yet how short he comes of him, and substitutes such verses of his own as deserve the ferula. What a censure has he made of Lucan, that "he rather seems to bark than sing?" Would any but a dog have made so snarling a comparison? one would have thought he had learned Latin as late as they tell us he did Greek. Yet he came off, with a *pace tuâ*,—by your good leave, Lucan; he called him not by those outrageous names, of fool, booby, and blockhead: he had somewhat more of good manners than his successors, as he had much more knowledge. We have two sorts of those gentlemen in our nation; some of them, proceeding with a seeming moderation and pretence of respect to the dramatic writers of the last age, only scorn and vilify the present poets, to set up their predecessors. But this is only in appearance; for their real design is nothing less than to do honour to any

man, besides themselves. Horace took notice of such men in his age:

Ingeniis non ille favet plauditque sepultis,
Nostra sed impugnat ; nos nostraque lividus odit.

It is not with an ultimate intention to pay reverence to the manes of Shakespeare, Fletcher, and Ben Jonson, that they commend their writings, but to throw dirt on the writers of this age: their declaration is one thing, and their practice is another. By a seeming veneration to our fathers, they would thrust out us, their lawful issue, and govern us themselves, under a specious pretence of reformation. If they could compass their intent, what would wit and learning get by such a change? If we are bad poets, they are worse; and when any of their woeful pieces come abroad, the difference is so great betwixt them and good writers, that there need no criticisms on our part to decide it. When they describe the writers of this age, they draw such monstrous figures of them, as resemble none of us; our pretended pictures are so unlike, that it is evident we never sat to them: they are all grotesque; the products of their wild imaginations, things out of nature; so far from being copied from us, that they resemble nothing that ever was, or ever can be. But there is another sort of insects, more venomous than the former; those who manifestly aim at the destruction of our poetical church and state; who allow nothing to their countrymen, either of this or of the former age. These attack the living by raking up the ashes of the dead; well knowing that if they can subvert their original title to the stage, we who claim under them must fall of course. Peace be to the venerable shades of Shakespeare and Ben Jonson! none of the living will presume to have any competition with them; as they were our

predecessors, so they were our masters. We trai. our plays under them; but as at the funerals of a Turkish emperor, our ensigns are furled or dragged upon the ground, in honour to the dead, so we may lawfully advance our own afterwards, to show that we succeed; if less in dignity, yet on the same foot and title, which we think too we can maintain against the insolence of our own janizaries. If I am the man, as I have reason to believe, who am seemingly courted, and secretly undermined; I think I shall be able to defend myself, when I am openly attacked; and to show, besides, that the Greek writers only gave us the rudiments of a stage which they never finished; that many of the tragedies in the former age amongst us were without comparison beyond those of Sophocles and Euripides. But at present, I have neither the leisure, nor the means, for such an undertaking. It is ill going to law for an estate, with him who is in possession of it, and enjoys the present profits, to feed his cause. But the *quantum mutatus* may be remembered in due time. In the mean while, I leave the world to judge, who gave the provocation.

This, my lord, is, I confess, a long digression, from miscellany poems to modern tragedies; but I have the ordinary excuse of an injured man, who will be telling his tale unseasonably to his betters; though, at the same time, I am certain you are so good a friend, as to take a concern in all things which belong to one who so truly honours you. And besides, being yourself a critic of the genuine sort, who have read the best authors in their own languages, who perfectly distinguish of their several merits, and, in general, prefer them to the moderns, yet, I know, you judge for the English tragedies, against the Greek and Latin, as well as against the French, Italian, and Spanish, of these latter ages. Indeed, there is a vast difference be-

twixt arguing like Perault, in behalf of the French poets, against Homer and Virgil, and betwixt giving the English poets their undoubted due, of excelling Æschylus, Euripides, and Sophocles. For if we, or our greater fathers, have not yet brought the drama to an absolute perfection, yet at least we have carried it much farther than those ancient Greeks; who, beginning from a chorus, could never totally exclude it, as we have done; who find it an unprofitable incumbrance, without any necessity of entertaining it amongst us, and without the possibility of establishing it here, unless it were supported by a public charge. Neither can we accept of those lay-bishops, as some call them, who, under pretence of reforming the stage, would intrude themselves upon us, as our superiors; being indeed incompetent judges of what is manners, what religion, and, least of all, what is poetry and good sense. I can tell them, in behalf of all my fellows, that when they come to exercise a jurisdiction over us, they shall have the stage to themselves, as they have the laurel. As little can I grant, that the French dramatic writers excel the English. Our authors as far surpass them in genius, as our soldiers excel theirs in courage. It is true, in conduct they surpass us either way; yet that proceeds not so much from their greater knowledge, as from the difference of tastes in the two nations. They content themselves with a thin design, without episodes, and managed by few persons; our audience will not be pleased, but with variety of accidents, an underplot, and many actors. They follow the ancients too servilely in the mechanic rules, and we assume too much licence to ourselves, in keeping them only in view, at too great a distance. But if our audience had their tastes, our poets could more easily comply with them, than the French writers could come up

to the sublimity of our thoughts, or to the difficult variety of our designs. However it be, I dare establish it for a rule of practice on the stage, that we are bound to please those whom we pretend to entertain; and that at any price, religion and good manners only excepted; and I care not much, if I give this handle to our bad illiterate poetasters, for the defence of their *Scriptions*, as they call them. There is a sort of merit in delighting the spectators, which is a name more proper for them, than that of auditors; or else Horace is in the wrong, when he commends Lucilius for it. But these common places I mean to treat at greater leisure; in the mean time submitting that little I have said to your lordship's approbation, or your censure, and chusing rather to entertain you this way, as you are a judge of writing, than to oppress your modesty with other commendations; which, though they are your due, yet would not be equally received in this satirical and censorious age. That which cannot, without injury, be denied to you, is the easiness of your conversation, far from affectation or pride; not denying even to enemies their just praises. And this, if I would dwell on any theme of this nature, is no vulgar commendation to your lordship. Without flattery, my lord, you have it in your nature, to be a patron and encourager of good poets; but your fortune has not yet put into your hands the opportunity of expressing it. What you will be hereafter, may be more than guessed, by what you are at present. You maintain the character of a nobleman, without that haughtiness which generally attends too many of the nobility; and when you converse with gentlemen, you forget not that you have been of their order. You are married to the daughter of a king; who, amongst her other high perfections, has derived from him a charming behaviour,

a winning goodness, and a majestic person. The Muses and the Graces are the ornaments of your family; while the Muse sings, the Grace accompanies her voice: Even the servants of the Muses have sometimes had the happiness to hear her, and to receive their inspirations from her.*

I will not give myself the liberty of going farther; for it is so sweet to wander in a pleasing way, that I should never arrive at my journey's end. To keep myself from being belated in my letter, and tiring your attention, I must return to the place where I was setting out. I humbly dedicate to your lordship my own labours in this Miscellany; at the same time, not arrogating to myself the privilege, of inscribing to you the works of others who are joined with me in this undertaking, over which I can pretend no right. Your lady and you have done me the favour to hear me read my translations of Ovid; and you both seemed not to be displeased with them. Whether it be the partiality of an old man to his youngest child, I know not; but they appear to me the best of all my endeavours in this kind. Perhaps this poet is more easy to be translated than some others whom I have lately attempted; perhaps, too, he was more according to my genius. He is certainly more palatable to the reader, than any of the Roman wits; though some of them are more lofty, some more instructive, and others more correct. He had learning enough to make him equal to the best; but, as his verse came easily, he wanted the toil of application to amend it. He

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* The poet apparently speaks of Lady Radcliffe, who probably inherited those vocal powers, with which her mother, Moll Davies, charmed Charles II. The Grace might be her daughter.

is often luxuriant both in his fancy and expressions, and, as it has lately been observed, not always natural. If wit be pleasantry, he has it to excess; but if it be propriety, Lucretius, Horace, and, above all, Virgil, are his superiors. I have said so much of him already in my preface to his "Heroical Epistles," that there remains little to be added in this place: For my own part, I have endeavoured to copy his character, what I could, in this translation; even, perhaps, farther than I should have done,—to his very faults. Mr Chapman, in his "Translation of Homer," professes to have done it somewhat paraphrastically, and that on set purpose; his opinion being, that a good poet is to be translated in that manner. I remember not the reason which he gives for it; but I suppose it is for fear of omitting any of his excellencies. Sure I am, that if it be a fault, it is much more pardonable than that of those, who run into the other extreme of a literal and close translation, where the poet is confined so straitly to his author's words, that he wants elbow-room to express his elegancies. He leaves him obscure; he leaves him prose, where he found him verse; and no better than thus has Ovid been served by the so-much-admired Sandys. This is at least the idea which I have remaining of his translation; for I never read him since I was a boy. They who take him upon content, from the praises which their fathers gave him, may inform their judgment by reading him again, and see (if they understand the original) what is become of Ovid's poetry in his version; whether it be not all, or the greatest part of it, evaporated. But this proceeded from the wrong judgment of the age in which he lived. They neither knew good verse, nor loved it; they were scholars, it is true, but they were pedants;

and, for a just reward of their pedantic pains, all their translations want to be translated into English.

If I flatter not myself, or if my friends have not flattered me, I have given my author's sense for the most part truly; for, to mistake sometimes is incident to all men; and not to follow the Dutch commentators always, may be forgiven to a man, who thinks them, in the general, heavy gross-witted fellows, fit only to gloss on their own dull poets. But I leave a farther satire on their wit, till I have a better opportunity to show how much I love and honour them. I have likewise attempted to restore Ovid to his native sweetness, easiness, and smoothness; and to give my poetry a kind of cadence, and, as we call it, a run of verse, as like the original, as the English can come up to the Latin. As he seldom uses any synalephas, so I have endeavoured to avoid them as often as I could. I have likewise given him his own turns, both on the words and on the thought; which I cannot say are inimitable, because I have copied them, and so may others, if they use the same diligence; but certainly they are wonderfully graceful in this poet. Since I have named the synalepha, which is the cutting off one vowel immediately before another, I will give an example of it from Chapman's "Homer," which lies before me, for the benefit of those who understand not the *Latin prosodia*. It is in the first line of the argument to the first Iliad:

> Apollo's priest to th' Argive fleet doth bring, &c.

There, we see, he makes it not, *the Argive*, but *th'Argive*, to shun the shock of the two vowels, immediately following each other; but, in his second ar-

gument, in the same page, he gives a bad example of the quite contrary kind:

> Alpha the prayer of Chryses sings:
> The army's plague, the strife of kings.

In these words, *the army's*,—*the* ending with a vowel, and *armies* beginning with another vowel, without cutting off the first, which by it had been *th' armies*, there remains a most horrible ill-sounding gap betwixt those words. I cannot say that I have every where observed the rule of the synalepha in my translation; but wheresoever I have not, it is a fault in sound. The French and the Italians have made it an inviolable precept in their versification; therein following the severe example of the Latin poets. Our countrymen have not yet reformed their poetry so far, but content themselves with following the licentious practice of the Greeks; who, though they sometimes use synalephas, yet make no difficulty, very often, to sound one vowel upon another; as Homer does, in the very first line of Alpha:

Μῆνιν ἄειδε, Θεὰ, Πηληιάδεω Ἀχιλῆος.

It is true, indeed, that, in the second line, in these words, μυρὶ Ἀχαιοῖς, and ἀλγὲ ἔθηκε, the synalepha, in revenge, is twice observed. But it becomes us, for the sake of euphony, rather *Musas colere severiores*, with the Romans, than to give into the looseness of the Grecians.

I have tired myself, and have been summoned by the press to send away this Dedication, otherwise I had exposed some other faults, which are daily committed by our English poets; which, with care and observation, might be amended. For, after all, our language is both copious, significant, and majestical, and might be reduced into a more harmonious sound. But, for want of public encourage-

ment, in this iron age, we are so far from making any progress in the improvement of our tongue, that in few years we shall speak and write as barbarously as our neighbours.

Notwithstanding my haste, I cannot forbear to tell your lordship, that there are two fragments of Homer translated in this Miscellany; one by Mr Congreve, (whom I cannot mention without the honour which is due to his excellent parts, and that entire affection which I bear him,) and the other by myself. Both the subjects are pathetical; and I am sure my friend has added to the tenderness which he found in the original, and, without flattery, surpassed his author. Yet I must needs say this in reference to Homer, that he is much more capable of exciting the manly passions than those of grief and pity. To cause admiration is, indeed, the proper and adequate design of an epic poem; and in that he has excelled even Virgil. Yet, without presuming to arraign our master, I may venture to affirm, that he is somewhat too talkative, and more than somewhat too digressive. This is so manifest, that it cannot be denied in that little parcel which I have translated, perhaps too literally: there Andromache, in the midst of her concernment and fright for Hector, runs off her bias, to tell him a story of her pedigree, and of the lamentable death of her father, her mother, and her seven brothers. The devil was in Hector if he knew not all this matter, as well as she who told it him; for she had been his bedfellow for many years together: and if he knew it, then it must be confessed, that Homer, in this long digression, has rather given us his own character, than that of the fair lady whom he paints. His dear friends, the commentators, who never fail him at a pinch, will needs excuse him, by making the present sorrow of Andromache to occasion the

remembrance of all the past; but others think, that she had enough to do with that grief which now oppressed her, without running for assistance to her family. Virgil, I am confident, would have omitted such a work of supererogation. But Virgil had the gift of expressing much in little, and sometimes in silence; for, though he yielded much to Homer in invention, he more excelled him in his admirable judgment. He drew the passion of Dido for Æneas, in the most lively and most natural colours that are imaginable. Homer was ambitious enough of moving pity, for he has attempted twice on the same subject of Hector's death: first, when Priam and Hecuba beheld his corpse, which was dragged after the chariot of Achilles; and then in the lamentation which was made over him, when his body was redeemed by Priam; and the same persons again bewail his death, with a chorus of others to help the cry. But if this last excite compassion in you, as I doubt not but it will, you are more obliged to the translator than the poet; for Homer, as I observed before, can move rage better than he can pity. He stirs up the irascible appetite, as our philosophers call it; he provokes to murder, and the destruction of God's images; he forms and equips those ungodly man-killers, whom we poets, when we flatter them, call heroes; a race of men who can never enjoy quiet in themselves, until they have taken it from all the world. This is Homer's commendation; and, such as it is, the lovers of peace, or at least of more moderate heroism, will never envy him. But let Homer and Virgil contend for the prize of honour betwixt themselves; I am satisfied they will never have a third concurrent. I wish Mr Congreve had the leisure to translate him, and the world the good nature and justice to encourage him in that noble design, of which he is more ca-

pable than any man I know. The Earl of Mulgrave and Mr Waller, two of the best judges of our age, have assured me, that they could never read over the translation of Chapman without incredible pleasure and extreme transport. This admiration of theirs must needs proceed from the author himself; for the translator has thrown him down as low as harsh numbers, improper English, and a monstrous length of verse could carry him. What then would he appear in the harmonious version of one of the best writers, living in a much better age than was the last? I mean for versification, and the art of numbers; for in the drama we have not arrived to the pitch of Shakespeare and Ben Jonson. But here, my lord, I am forced to break off abruptly, without endeavouring at a compliment in the close This Miscellany is, without dispute, one of the best of the kind which has hitherto been extant in our tongue; at least, as Sir Samuel Tuke has said before me, a modest man may praise what is not his own. My fellows have no need of any protection; but I humbly recommend my part of it, as much as it deserves, to your patronage and acceptance, and all the rest to your forgiveness. I am,

My Lord,

Your Lordship's most obedient servant,

John Dryden.

THE

FIRST BOOK

OF

OVID'S METAMORPHOSES.

Of bodies changed to various forms I sing:—
Ye gods, from whence these miracles did spring,
Inspire my numbers with celestial heat,
Till I my long laborious work complete;
And add perpetual tenor to my rhymes,
Deduced from nature's birth to Cæsar's times.
Before the seas, and this terrestrial ball,
And heaven's high canopy, that covers all,
One was the face of nature, if a face;
Rather a rude and indigested mass;
A lifeless lump, unfashioned, and unframed,
Of jarring seeds, and justly chaos named.
No sun was lighted up the world to view;
No moon did yet her blunted horns renew;
Nor yet was earth suspended in the sky,
Nor, poised, did on her own foundations lie:

Nor seas about the shores their arms had thrown;
But earth, and air, and water, were in one.
Thus air was void of light, and earth unstable,
And water's dark abyss unnavigable.
No certain form on any was imprest;
All were confused, and each disturbed the rest:
For hot and cold were in one body fixed;
And soft with hard, and light with heavy, mixed.
But God, or Nature, while they thus contend,
To these intestine discords put an end.
Then earth from air, and seas from earth, were driven,
And grosser air sunk from ætherial heaven.
Thus disembroiled, they take their proper place;
The next of kin contiguously embrace;
And foes are sundered by a larger space.
The force of fire ascended first on high,
And took its dwelling in the vaulted sky.
Then air succeeds, in lightness next to fire,
Whose atoms from unactive earth retire.
Earth sinks beneath, and draws a numerous throng,
Of ponderous, thick, unwieldy seeds along.
About her coasts unruly waters roar,
And, rising on a ridge, insult the shore.
Thus when the God, whatever God was he,
Had formed the whole, and made the parts agree,
That no unequal portions might be found,
He moulded earth into a spacious round;
Then, with a breath, he gave the winds to blow,
And bade the congregated waters flow:
He adds the running springs, and standing lakes,
And bounding banks for winding rivers makes.
Some part in earth are swallowed up, the most
In ample oceans, disembogued, are lost:
He shades the woods, the vallies he restrains
With rocky mountains, and extends the plains.
And as five zones the ætherial regions bind,
Five, correspondent, are to earth assigned;

The sun, with rays directly darting down,
Fires all beneath, and fries the middle zone:
The two beneath the distant poles complain
Of endless winter, and perpetual rain.
Betwixt the extremes, two happier climates hold
The temper that partakes of hot and cold.
The fields of liquid air, inclosing all,
Surround the compass of this earthly ball:
The lighter parts lie next the fires above;
The grosser near the watery surface move:
Thick clouds are spread, and storms engender there,
And thunder's voice, which wretched mortals fear,
And winds that on their wings cold winter bear.
Nor were those blustering brethren left at large,
On seas and shores their fury to discharge:
Bound as they are, and circumscribed in place,
They rend the world, resistless, where they pass,
And mighty marks of mischief leave behind;
Such is the rage of their tempestuous kind.
First, Eurus to the rising morn is sent,
(The regions of the balmy continent,)
And eastern realms, where early Persians run,
To greet the blest appearance of the sun.
Westward the wanton Zephyr wings his flight,
Pleased with the remnants of departing light;
Fierce Boreas with his offspring issues forth,
To invade the frozen waggon of the North;
While frowning Auster seeks the southern sphere,
And rots, with endless rain, the unwholesome year.
High o'er the clouds, and empty realms of wind,
The God a clearer space for heaven designed;
Where fields of light and liquid æther flow,
Purged from the ponderous dregs of earth below.
Scarce had the Power distinguished these, when straight
The stars, no longer overlaid with weight,

Exert their heads from underneath the mass,
And upward shoot, and kindle as they pass,
And with diffusive light adorn the heavenly place.
Then, every void of nature to supply,
With forms of gods he fills the vacant sky:
New herds of beasts he sends, the plains to share;
New colonies of birds, to people air;
And to their oozy beds the finny fish repair.
A creature of a more exalted kind
Was wanting yet, and then was Man designed;
Conscious of thought, of more capacious breast,
For empire formed, and fit to rule the rest:
Whether with particles of heavenly fire
The God of nature did his soul inspire;
Or earth, but new divided from the sky,
And pliant still, retained the etherial energy;
Which wise Prometheus tempered into paste,
And, mixed with living streams, the god-like image cast.
Thus, while the mute creation downward bend
Their sight, and to their earthly mother tend,
Man looks aloft, and, with erected eyes,
Beholds his own hereditary skies.—
From such rude principles our form began,
And earth was metamorphosed into man.

The Golden Age.

The Golden Age was first; when man, yet new,
No rule but uncorrupted reason knew;
And, with a native bent, did good pursue.
Unforced by punishment, unawed by fear,
His words were simple, and his soul sincere.
Needless was written law, where none oppress;
The law of man was written in his breast.

No suppliant crowds before the judge appeared;
No court erected yet, nor cause was heard;
But all was safe, for conscience was their guard.
The mountain trees in distant prospect please,
Ere yet the pine descended to the seas;
Ere sails were spread, new oceans to explore;
And happy mortals, unconcerned for more,
Confined their wishes to their native shore.
No walls were yet, nor fence, nor moat, nor mound;
Nor drum was heard, nor trumpet's angry sound;
Nor swords were forged; but, void of care and crime,
The soft creation slept away their time.
The teeming earth, yet guiltless of the plough,
And unprovoked, did fruitful stores allow:
Content with food, which nature freely bred,
On wildings and on strawberries they fed;
Cornels and bramble-berries gave the rest,
And falling acorns furnished out a feast.
The flowers, unsown, in fields and meadows reigned;
And western winds immortal spring maintained.
In following years the bearded corn ensued
From earth unasked, nor was that earth renewed.
From veins of vallies milk and nectar broke,
And honey sweating through the pores of oak.

The Silver Age.

But when good Saturn, banished from above,
Was driven to hell, the world was under Jove.
Succeeding times a silver age behold,
Excelling brass, but more excelled by gold.
Then Summer, Autumn, Winter did appear,
And Spring was but a season of the year.
The sun his annual course obliquely made,
Good days contracted, and enlarged the bad.

Then air with sultry heats began to glow,
The wings of winds were clogged with ice and snow;
And shivering mortals, into houses driven,
Sought shelter from the inclemency of heaven.
Those houses, then, were caves, or homely sheds,
With twining oziers fenced, and moss their beds.
Then ploughs for seed the fruitful furrows broke,
And oxen laboured first beneath the yoke.

The Brazen Age.

To this next came in course the Brazen Age:
A warlike offspring prompt to bloody rage,
Not impious yet.——

The Iron Age.

————Hard steel succeeded then;
And stubborn as the metal were the men.
Truth, modesty, and shame, the world forsook;
Fraud, avarice, and force, their places took.
Then sails were spread to every wind that blew;
Raw were the sailors, and the depths were new:
Trees, rudely hollowed, did the waves sustain,
Ere ships in triumph ploughed the watery plain.
Then land-marks limited to each his right;
For all before was common as the light.
Nor was the ground alone required to bear
Her annual income to the crooked share;
But greedy mortals, rummaging her store,
Digged from her entrails first the precious ore;
Which next to hell the prudent gods had laid,
And that alluring ill to sight displayed.
Thus cursed steel, and more accursed gold,
Gave mischief birth, and made that mischief bold;

And double death did wretched man invade,
By steel assaulted, and by gold betrayed.
Now (brandished weapons glittering in their hands)
Mankind is broken loose from moral bands:
No rights of hospitality remain,
The guest, by him who harboured him, is slain;
The son-in-law pursues the father's life;
The wife her husband murders, he the wife;
The step-dame poison for the son prepares;
The son inquires into his father's years.
Faith flies, and Piety in exile mourns;
And Justice, here oppressed, to heaven returns.

The Giant's War.

Nor were the Gods themselves more safe above;
Against beleaguered heaven the Giants move.
Hills piled on hills, on mountains mountains lie,
To make their mad approaches to the sky:
Till Jove, no longer patient, took his time
To avenge with thunder their audacious crime;
Red lightning played along the firmament,
And their demolished works to pieces rent.
Singed with the flames, and with the bolts transfixed,
With native earth their blood the monsters mixed;
The blood, endued with animating heat,
Did in the impregnate earth new sons beget;
They, like the seed from which they sprung, accursed,
Against the gods immortal hatred nursed;
An impious, arrogant, and cruel brood,
Expressing their original from blood.
Which when the King of Gods beheld from high,
(Withal revolving in his memory,
What he himself had found on earth of late,
Lycaon's guilt, and his inhuman treat,)

He sighed, nor longer with his pity strove,
But kindled to a wrath becoming Jove:
Then called a general council of the gods;
Who, summoned, issue from their blest abodes,
And fill the assembly with a shining train.
A way there is in heaven's expanded plain,
Which, when the skies are clear, is seen below,
And mortals by the name of milky know.
The ground-work is of stars; through which the road
Lies open to the Thunderer's abode.
The gods of greater nations dwell around,
And on the right and left the palace bound;
The commons where they can; the nobler sort,
With winding doors wide open, front the court.
This place, as far as earth with heaven may vie,
I dare to call the Louvre of the sky.
When all were placed, in seats distinctly known,
And he, their father, had assumed the throne,
Upon his ivory sceptre first he leant,
Then shook his head, that shook the firmament;
Air, earth, and seas, obeyed the almighty nod,
And with a general fear confessed the God.
At length, with indignation, thus he broke
His awful silence, and the Powers bespoke.
I was not more concerned in that debate
Of empire, when our universal state
Was put to hazard, and the giant race
Our captive skies were ready to embrace:
For, though the foe was fierce, the seeds of all
Rebellion sprung from one original;
Now wheresoever ambient waters glide,
All are corrupt, and all must be destroyed.
Let me this holy protestation make,
By hell, and hell's inviolable lake!
I tried whatever in the Godhead lay;
But gangrened members must be lopt away,
Before the nobler parts are tainted to decay.

There dwells below a race of demi-gods,
Of nymphs in waters, and of fauns in woods;
Who, though not worthy yet in heaven to live,
Let them at least enjoy that earth we give.
Can these be thought securely lodged below,
When I myself, who no superior know,
I, who have heaven and earth at my command,
Have been attempted by Lycaon's hand?
At this a murmur through the synod went,
And with one voice they vote his punishment.
Thus, when conspiring traitors dared to doom
The fall of Cæsar, and in him of Rome,
The nations trembled with a pious fear,
All anxious for their earthly thunderer;—
Nor was their care, O Cæsar, less esteemed
By thee, than that of heaven for Jove was deemed;
Who with his hand, and voice, did first restrain
Their murmurs, then resumed his speech again.
The Gods to silence were composed, and sat
With reverence due to his superior state.
Cancel your pious cares; already he
Has paid his debt to justice, and to me.
Yet what his crimes, and what my judgments were,
Remains for me thus briefly to declare.
The clamours of this vile degenerate age,
The cries of orphans, and the oppressor's rage,
Had reached the stars; I will descend, said I,
In hope to prove this loud complaint a lie.
Disguised in human shape, I travelled round
The world, and more than what I heard, I found.
O'er Mænalus I took my steepy way,
By caverns infamous for beasts of prey;
Then crossed Cyllene, and the piny shade,
More infamous by curst Lycaon made;
Dark night had covered heaven and earth, before
I entered his inhospitable door.

Just at my entrance, I displayed the sign
That somewhat was approaching of divine.
The prostrate people pray; the tyrant grins;
And, adding profanation to his sins,
I'll try, said he, and if a God appear,
To prove his deity shall cost him dear.
'Twas late; the graceless wretch my death prepares,
When I should soundly sleep, oppress with cares:
This dire experiment he chose, to prove
If I were mortal, or undoubted Jove.
But first he had resolved to taste my power:
Not long before, but in a luckless hour,
Some legates, sent from the Molossian state,
Were on a peaceful errand come to treat;
Of these he murders one, he boils the flesh,
And lays the mangled morsels in a dish;
Some part he roasts; then serves it up so drest,
And bids me welcome to this human feast.
Moved with disdain, the table I o'erturned,
And with avenging flames the palace burned.
The tyrant, in a fright, for shelter gains
The neighbouring fields, and scours along the plains.
Howling he fled, and fain he would have spoke,
But human voice his brutal tongue forsook.
About his lips the gathered foam he churns,
And, breathing slaughter, still with rage he burns,
But on the bleating flock his fury turns.
His mantle, now his hide, with rugged hairs
Cleaves to his back; a famished face he bears;
His arms descend, his shoulders sink away,
To multiply his legs for chace of prey.
He grows a wolf, his hoariness remains,
And the same rage in other members reigns.
His eyes still sparkle in a narrower space,
His jaws retain the grin, and violence of his face:
This was a single ruin, but not one
Deserves so just a punishment alone.

Mankind's a monster, and the ungodly times,
Confederate into guilt, are sworn to crimes.
All are alike involved in ill, and all
Must by the same relentless fury fall.
Thus ended he; the greater gods assent,
By clamours urging his severe intent;
The less fill up the cry for punishment.
Yet still with pity they remember man,
And mourn as much as heavenly spirits can.
They ask, when those were lost of human birth,
What he would do with all his waste of earth?
If his dispeopled world he would resign
To beasts, a mute, and more ignoble line?
Neglected altars must no longer smoke,
If none were left to worship and invoke.
To whom the Father of the Gods replied:
Lay that unnecessary fear aside;
Mine be the care new people to provide.
I will from wonderous principles ordain
A race unlike the first, and try my skill again.
Already had he tossed the flaming brand,
And rolled the thunder in his spacious hand,
Preparing to discharge on seas and land;
But stop'd, for fear, thus violently driven,
The sparks should catch his axle-tree of heaven;
Remembering, in the Fates, a time, when fire
Should to the battlements of heaven aspire,
And all his blazing worlds above should burn,
And all the inferior globe to cinders turn.
His dire artillery thus dismissed, he bent
His thoughts to some securer punishment;
Concludes to pour a watery deluge down,
And, what he durst not burn, resolves to drown.
The Northern breath, that freezes floods, he binds,
With all the race of cloud-dispelling winds;
The South he loosed, who night and horror brings,
And fogs are shaken from his flaggy wings.

From his divided beard two streams he pours;
His head and rheumy eyes distil in showers;
With rain his robe and heavy mantle flow,
And lazy mists are lowring on his brow.
Still as he swept along, with his clenched fist,
He squeezed the clouds; the imprisoned clouds resist;
The skies, from pole to pole, with peals resound,
And showers enlarged come pouring on the ground.
Then clad in colours of a various dye,
Junonian Iris breeds a new supply
To feed the clouds: impetuous rain descends;
The bearded corn beneath the burden bends;
Defrauded clowns deplore their perished grain,
And the long labours of the year are vain.
Nor from his patrimonial heaven alone
Is Jove content to pour his vengeance down;
Aid from his brother of the seas he craves,
To help him with auxiliary waves.
The watery tyrant calls his brooks and floods,
Who roll from mossy caves, their moist abodes;
And with perpetual urns his palace fill:
To whom, in brief, he thus imparts his will.
Small exhortation needs; your powers employ,
And this bad world (so Jove requires) destroy.
Let loose the reins to all your watery store;
Bear down the dams, and open every door.
The floods, by nature enemies to land,
And proudly swelling with their new command,
Remove the living stones that stopped their way,
And, gushing from their source, augment the sea. *

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* In all our earlier poets, the word *sea* is occasionally made to rheme, according to the pronunciation of Hibernia, as if spelled *say*.

Then, with his mace, their monarch struck the ground;
With inward trembling earth received the wound,
And rising streams a ready passage found.
The expanded waters gather on the plain,
They float the fields, and overtop the grain;
Then rushing onwards, with a sweepy sway,
Bear flocks, and folds, and labouring hinds, away.
Nor safe their dwellings were; for, sap'd by floods,
Their houses fell upon their household gods.
The solid piles, too strongly built to fall,
High o'er their heads behold a watery wall.
Now seas and earth were in confusion lost;
A world of waters, and without a coast.
One climbs a cliff; one in his boat is borne,
And ploughs above, where late he sowed his corn.
Others o'er chimney tops and turrets row,
And drop their anchors on the meads below;
Or, downward driven, they bruise the tender vine,
Or, tossed aloft, are knocked against a pine;
And where of late the kids had cropped the grass,
The monsters of the deep now take their place.
Insulting Nereids on the cities ride,
And wondering dolphins o'er the palace glide;
On leaves, and masts of mighty oaks, they brouze;
And their broad fins entangle in the boughs.
The frighted wolf now swims among the sheep;
The yellow lion wanders in the deep;
His rapid force no longer helps the boar;
The stag swims faster than he ran before.*
The fowls, long beating on their wings in vain,
Despair of land, and drop into the main.

* Ovid is not answerable for the speed of the stag's exertions in the water; he barely says,

Crura nec ablato prosunt velocia cervo.

Now hills and vales no more distinction know,
And levelled nature lies oppressed below.
The most of mortals perish in the flood,
The small remainder dies for want of food.
A mountain of stupendous height there stands
Betwixt the Athenian and Bæotian lands,
The bound of fruitful fields, while fields they were,
But then a field of waters did appear:
Parnassus is its name, whose forky rise
Mounts through the clouds, and mates the lofty skies.
High on the summit of this dubious cliff,
Deucalion wafting moored his little skiff.
He with his wife were only left behind
Of perished man; they two were human kind.
The mountain-nymphs and Themis they adore,
And from her oracles relief implore.
The most upright of mortal men was he;
The most sincere and holy woman, she.
When Jupiter, surveying earth from high,
Beheld it in a lake of water lie,
That where so many millions lately lived,
But two, the best of either sex, survived,
He loosed the northern wind; fierce Boreas flies
To puff away the clouds, and purge the skies;
Serenely, while he blows, the vapours driven
Discover heaven to earth, and earth to heaven.
The billows fall, while Neptune lays his mace
On the rough sea, and smooths its furrowed face.
Already Triton, at his call, appears
Above the waves; a Tyrian robe he wears;
And in his hand a crooked trumpet bears.
The sovereign bids him peaceful sounds inspire,
And give the waves the signal to retire.
His writhen shell he takes, whose narrow vent
Grows by degrees into a large extent;
Then gives it breath; the blast, with doubling sound,
Runs the wide circuit of the world around.

The sun first heard it, in his early east,
And met the rattling echoes in the west.
The waters, listening to the trumpet's roar,
Obey the summons, and forsake the shore.
A thin circumference of land appears;
And earth, but not at once, her visage rears,
And peeps upon the seas from upper grounds:
The streams, but just contained within their bounds,
By slow degrees into their channels crawl,
And earth increases as the waters fall.
In longer time the tops of trees appear,
Which mud on their dishonoured branches bear.
At length the world was all restored to view,
But desolate, and of a sickly hue:
Nature beheld herself, and stood aghast,
A dismal desert, and a silent waste.
Which when Deucalion, with a piteous look,
Beheld, he wept, and thus to Pyrrha spoke:
Oh wife, oh sister, oh of all thy kind
The best and only creature left behind,
By kindred, love, and now by dangers joined;
Of multitudes, who breathed the common air,
We two remain, a species in a pair:
The rest the seas have swallowed; nor have we
E'en of this wretched life a certainty.
The clouds are still above; and, while I speak,
A second deluge o'er our heads may break.
Should I be snatched from hence, and thou remain,
Without relief, or partner of thy pain,
How could'st thou such a wretched life sustain?
Should I be left, and thou be lost, the sea,
That buried her I loved, should bury me.
Oh could our father his old arts inspire,
And make me heir of his informing fire,
That so I might abolished man retrieve,
And perished people in new souls might live!

But heaven is pleased, nor ought we to complain,
That we, the examples of mankind, remain. —
He said; the careful couple join their tears,
And then invoke the gods, with pious prayers.
Thus in devotion having eased their grief,
From sacred oracles they seek relief,
And to Cephisus' brook their way pursue;
The stream was troubled, but the ford they knew.
With living waters in the fountain bred,
They sprinkle first their garments, and their head,
Then took the way which to the temple led.
The roofs were all defiled with moss and mire,
The desert altars void of solemn fire.
Before the gradual prostrate they adored,
The pavement kissed, and thus the saint implored.
O righteous Themis, if the powers above
By prayers are bent to pity and to love;
If human miseries can move their mind;
If yet they can forgive, and yet be kind;
Tell how we may restore, by second birth,
Mankind, and people desolated earth.
Then thus the gracious goddess, nodding, said;
Depart, and with your vestments veil your head:
And stooping lowly down, with loosened zones,
Throw each behind your backs your mighty mother's bones.
Amazed the pair, and mute with wonder, stand,
Till Pyrrha first refused the dire command.
Forbid it heaven, said she, that I should tear
Those holy relics from the sepulchre.
They pondered the mysterious words again,
For some new sense; and long they sought in vain.
At length Deucalion cleared his cloudy brow,
And said; The dark ænigma will allow
A meaning, which, if well I understand,
From sacrilege will free the god's command:

This earth our mighty mother is, the stones
In her capacious body are her bones;
These we must cast behind. With hope, and fear,
The woman did the new solution hear:
The man diffides in his own augury,
And doubts the gods; yet both resolve to try.
Descending from the mount, they first unbind
Their vests, and, veiled, they cast the stones behind:
The stones (a miracle to mortal view,
But long tradition makes it pass for true,)
Did first the rigour of their kind expel,
And suppled into softness as they fell;
Then swelled, and, swelling, by degrees grew warm,
And took the rudiments of human form;
Imperfect shapes, in marble such are seen,
When the rude chisel does the man begin,
While yet the roughness of the stone remains,
Without the rising muscles, and the veins.
The sappy parts, and next resembling juice,
Were turned to moisture, for the body's use;
Supplying humours, blood, and nourishment:
The rest, too solid to receive a bent,
Converts to bones; and what was once a vein,
Its former name and nature did retain.
By help of power divine, in little space,
What the man threw, assumed a manly face;
And what the wife, renewed the female race.
Hence we derive our nature, born to bear
Laborious life, and hardened into care.

The rest of animals, from teeming earth
Produced, in various forms received their birth.
The native moisture, in its close retreat,
Digested by the sun's etherial heat,
As in a kindly womb, began to breed;
Then swelled, and quickened by the vital seed:
And some in less, and some in longer space,
Were ripened into form, and took a several face.

Thus when the Nile from Pharian fields is fled,
And seeks with ebbing tides his ancient bed,
The fat manure with heavenly fire is warmed,
And crusted creatures, as in wombs, are formed:
These, when they turn the glebe, the peasants find:
Some rude, and yet unfinished in their kind;
Short of their limbs, a lame imperfect birth;
One half alive, and one of lifeless earth.
For, heat and moisture, when in bodies joined,
The temper that results from either kind,
Conception makes; and fighting, till they mix,
Their mingled atoms in each other fix.
Thus nature's hand the genial bed prepares,
With friendly discord, and with fruitful wars.
From hence the surface of the ground, with mud
And slime besmeared, (the fæces of the flood,)
Received the rays of heaven; and sucking in
The seeds of heat, new creatures did begin.
Some were of several sorts produced before;
But of new monsters earth created more.
Unwillingly, but yet she brought to light
Thee, Python, too, the wondering world to fright,
And the new nations with so dire a sight;
So monstrous was his bulk, so large a space
Did his vast body and long train embrace:
Whom Phœbus basking on a bank espied.
Ere now the god his arrows had not tried,
But on the trembling deer, or mountain-goat;
At this new quarry he prepares to shoot.
Though every shaft took place, he spent the store
Of his full quiver; and 'twas long before
The expiring serpent wallowed in his gore.
Then to preserve the fame of such a deed,
For Python slain, he Pythian games decreed,
Where noble youths for mastership should strive,
To quoit, to run, and steeds and chariots drive.

The prize was fame, in witness of renown,
An oaken garland did the victor crown.
The laurel was not yet for triumphs borne;
But every green alike, by Phœbus worn,
Did, with promiscuous grace, his flowing locks adorn.

The Transformation of Daphne into a Laurel.

The first and fairest of his loves was she,
Whom not blind fortune, but the dire decree
Of angry Cupid, forced him to desire;
Daphne her name, and Peneus was her sire.
Swelled with the pride that new success attends,
He sees the stripling, while his bow he bends,
And thus insults him: Thou lascivious boy,
Are arms like these for children to employ?
Know, such atchievements are my proper claim,
Due to my vigour and unerring aim:
Resistless are my shafts, and Python late,
In such a feathered death, has found his fate.
Take up thy torch, and lay my weapons by;
With that the feeble souls of lovers fry.—
To whom the son of Venus thus replied:
Phœbus, thy shafts are sure on all beside;
But mine on Phœbus; mine the fame shall be
Of all thy conquests, when I conquer thee.
He said, and soaring swiftly winged his flight;
Nor stop'd but on Parnassus' airy height.
Two different shafts he from his quiver draws;
One to repel desire, and one to cause.
One shaft is pointed with refulgent gold,
To bribe the love, and make the lover bold;
One blunt, and tipt with lead, whose base allay
Provokes disdain, and drives desire away.

The blunted bolt against the nymph he drest;
But with the sharp transfixed Apollo's breast.
The enamoured deity pursues the chace;
The scornful damsel shuns his loathed embrace:
In hunting beasts of prey her youth employs,
And Phœbe rivals in her rural joys.
With naked neck she goes, and shoulders bare,
And with a fillet binds her flowing hair.
By many suitors sought, she mocks their pains,
And still her vowed virginity maintains.
Impatient of a yoke, the name of bride
She shuns, and hates the joys she never tried.
On wilds and woods she fixes her desire;
Nor knows what youth and kindly love inspire.
Her father chides her oft: Thou ow'st, says he,
A husband to thyself, a son to me.
She, like a crime, abhors the nuptial bed;
She glows with blushes, and she hangs her head.
Then, casting round his neck her tender arms,
Sooths him with blandishments, and filial charms:
Give me, my lord, she said, to live and die
A spotless maid, without the marriage-tie.
'Tis but a small request; I beg no more
Than what Diana's father gave before.
The good old sire was softened to consent;
But said her wish would prove her punishment;
For so much youth, and so much beauty joined,
Opposed the state which her desires designed.
The God of Light, aspiring to her bed,
Hopes what he seeks, with flattering fancies fed,
And is by his own oracles misled.
And as in empty fields the stubble burns,
Or nightly travellers, when day returns,
Their useless torches on dry hedges throw,
That catch the flames, and kindle all the row;
So burns the god, consuming in desire,
And feeding in his breast the fruitless fire:

Her well-turned neck he viewed, (her neck was bare,)
And on her shoulders her dishevelled hair:
Oh were it combed, said he, with what a grace
Would every waving curl become her face!
He viewed her eyes, like heavenly lamps that shone;
He viewed her lips, too sweet to view alone;
Her taper fingers, and her panting breast:
He praises all he sees; and for the rest,
Believes the beauties yet unseen are best.
Swift as the wind, the damsel fled away,
Nor did for these alluring speeches stay.
Stay, nymph, he cried; I follow, not a foe:
Thus from the lion trips the trembling doe;
Thus from the wolf the frightened lamb removes,
And from pursuing falcons fearful doves;
Thou shun'st a god, and shun'st a god that loves.
Ah! lest some thorn should pierce thy tender foot,
Or thou should'st fall in flying my pursuit,
To sharp uneven ways thy steps decline,
Abate thy speed, and I will bate of mine.
Yet think from whom thou dost so rashly fly;
Nor basely born, nor shepherd's swain am I.
Perhaps thou know'st not my superior state,
And from that ignorance proceeds thy hate.
Me Claros, Delphos, Tenedos, obey;
These hands the Patareian sceptre sway.
The king of gods begot me: what shall be,
Or is, or ever was, in fate, I see.
Mine is the invention of the charming lyre;
Sweet notes, and heavenly numbers, I inspire.
Sure is my bow, unerring is my dart;
But ah! more deadly his, who pierced my heart.
Med'cine is mine, what herbs and simples grow
In fields and forests, all their powers I know,
And am the great physician called below.
Alas, that fields and forests can afford
No remedies to heal their love-sick lord!

To cure the pains of love, no plant avails,
And his own physic the physician fails.
  She heard not half, so furiously she flies,
And on her ear the imperfect accent dies.
Fear gave her wings; and as she fled, the wind
Increasing spread her flowing hair behind;
And left her legs and thighs exposed to view,
Which made the god more eager to pursue.
The god was young, and was too hotly bent
To lose his time in empty compliment;
But led by love, and fired by such a sight,
Impetuously pursued his near delight.
  As when the impatient greyhound, slipt from far,
Bounds o'er the glebe, to course the fearful hare,
She in her speed does all her safety lay,
And he with double speed pursues the prey;
O'er-runs her at the sitting turn, and licks
His chaps in vain, and blows upon the flix;*
She 'scapes, and for the neighbouring covert strives,
And gaining shelter doubts if yet she lives.
If little things with great we may compare,
Such was the god, and such the flying fair:
She, urged by fear, her feet did swiftly move,
But he more swiftly, who was urged by love.
He gathers ground upon her in the chace;
Now breathes upon her hair, with nearer pace,
And just is fastening on the wished embrace.
The nymph grew pale, and in a mortal fright,
Spent with the labour of so long a flight,
And now despairing, cast a mournful look
Upon the streams of her paternal brook:

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* See the same image in the "Annus Mirabilis:"

"With his loll'd tongue he faintly licks his prey,
His warm breath blows her flix up as she lies."
Vol. IX. p. 128.

Oh help, she cried, in this extremest need,
If water-gods are deities indeed!
Gape, earth, and this unhappy wretch entomb,
Or change my form, whence all my sorrows come.
Scarce had she finished, when her feet she found
Benumbed with cold, and fastened to the ground;
A filmy rind about her body grows,
Her hair to leaves, her arms extend to boughs;
The nymph is all into a Laurel gone,
The smoothness of her skin remains alone.
Yet Phœbus loves her still, and, casting round
Her bole his arms, some little warmth he found.
The tree still panted in the unfinished part,
Not wholly vegetive, and heaved her heart.
He fixed his lips upon the trembling rind;
It swerved aside, and his embrace declined.
To whom the god: Because thou canst not be
My mistress, I espouse thee for my tree:
Be thou the prize of honour and renown;
The deathless poet, and the poem, crown.
Thou shalt the Roman festivals adorn,
And, after poets, be by victors worn;
Thou shalt returning Cæsar's triumph grace,
When pomps shall in a long procession pass;
Wreathed on the post before his palace wait,
And be the sacred guardian of the gate:
Secure from thunder, and unharmed by Jove,
Unfading as the immortal powers above;
And as the locks of Phœbus are unshorn,
So shall perpetual green thy boughs adorn.—
The grateful Tree was pleased with what he said,
And shook the shady honours of her head.

The Transformation of Io into an Heifer.

An ancient forest in Thessalia grows,
Which Tempe's pleasant valley does inclose;

Through this the rapid Peneus takes his course,
From Pindus rolling with impetuous force;
Mists from the river's mighty fall arise,
And deadly damps inclose the cloudy skies;
Perpetual fogs are hanging o'er the wood,
And sounds of waters deaf the neighbourhood.
Deep in a rocky cave he makes abode;
A mansion proper for a mourning god.
Here he gives audience; issuing out decrees
To rivers, his dependent deities.
On this occasion hither they resort,
To pay their homage, and to make their court;
All doubtful, whether to congratulate
His daughter's honour, or lament her fate.
Sperchæus, crowned with poplar, first appears;
Then old Apidanus came, crowned with years;
Enipeus turbulent, Amphrysos tame,
And Æas, last, with lagging waters came.
Then of his kindred brooks a numerous throng
Condole his loss, and bring their urns along:
Not one was wanting of the watery train,
That filled his flood, or mingled with the main,
But Inachus, who, in his cave alone,
Wept not another's losses, but his own;
For his dear Io, whether strayed, or dead,
To him uncertain, doubtful tears he shed.
He sought her through the world, but sought in vain;
And no where finding, rather feared her slain.
Her, just returning from her father's brook,
Jove had beheld with a desiring look;
And, oh, fair daughter of the flood, he said,
Worthy alone of Jove's imperial bed,
Happy whoever shall those charms possess!
The king of gods, (nor is thy lover less,)
Invites thee to yon cooler shades, to shun
The scorching rays of the meridian sun.

Nor shalt thou tempt the dangers of the grove
Alone without a guide; thy guide is Jove.
No puny power, but he, whose high command
Is unconfined, who rules the seas and land,
And tempers thunder in his awful hand.
Oh fly not!—for she fled from his embrace
O'er Lerna's pastures; he pursued the chace,
Along the shades of the Lyrcæan plain.
At length the god, who never asks in vain,
Involved with vapours, imitating night,
Both air and earth; and then suppressed her flight,
And, mingling force with love, enjoyed the full delight.
Meantime the jealous Juno, from on high,
Surveyed the fruitful fields of Arcady;
And wondered that the mist should over-run
The face of day-light, and obscure the sun.
No natural cause she found, from brooks or bogs,
Or marshy lowlands, to produce the fogs:
Then round the skies she sought for Jupiter,
Her faithless husband; but no Jove was there.
Suspecting now the worst,—Or I, she said,
Am much mistaken, or am much betrayed.
With fury she precipitates her flight,
Dispels the shadows of dissembled night,
And to the day restores his native light.
The almighty lecher, careful to prevent
The consequence, foreseeing her descent,
Transforms his mistress in a trice; and now,
In Io's place, appears a lovely cow.
So sleek her skin, so faultless was her make,
Even Juno did unwilling pleasure take
To see so fair a rival of her love;
And what she was, and whence, enquired of Jove,
Of what fair herd, and from what pedigree?
The god, half-caught, was forced upon a lie,

And said she sprung from earth. She took the word,
And begged the beauteous heifer of her lord.
What should he do? 'twas equal shame to Jove,
Or to relinquish, or betray his love;
Yet to refuse so slight a gift, would be
But more to increase his consort's jealousy.
Thus fear, and love, by turns his heart assailed;
And stronger love had sure at length prevailed,
But some faint hope remained, his jealous queen
Had not the mistress through the heifer seen.
The cautious goddess, of her gift possest,
Yet harboured anxious thoughts within her breast;
As she, who knew the falsehood of her Jove,
And justly feared some new relapse of love;
Which to prevent, and to secure her care,
To trusty Argus she commits the fair.
The head of Argus (as with stars the skies,)
Was compassed round, and wore an hundred eyes.
But two by turns their lids in slumber steep;
The rest on duty still their station keep;
Nor could the total constellation sleep.
Thus, ever present to his eyes and mind,
His charge was still before him, though behind.
In fields he suffered her to feed by day;
But, when the setting sun to night gave way,
The captive cow he summoned with a call,
And drove her back, and tied her to the stall.
On leaves of trees and bitter herbs she fed,
Heaven was her canopy, bare earth her bed,
So hardly lodged; and, to digest her food,
She drank from troubled streams, defiled with mud.
Her woeful story fain she would have told,
With hands upheld, but had no hands to hold.
Her head to her ungentle keeper bowed,
She strove to speak; she spoke not, but she lowed;
Affrighted with the noise, she looked around,
And seemed to inquire the author of the sound.

Once on the banks where often she had played,
(Her father's banks,) she came, and there surveyed
Her altered visage, and her branching head;
And starting from herself, she would have fled.
Her fellow-nymphs, familiar to her eyes,
Beheld, but knew her not in this disguise.
Even Inachus himself was ignorant;
And in his daughter, did his daughter want.
She followed where her fellows went, as she
Were still a partner of the company:
They stroke her neck; the gentle heifer stands,
And her neck offers to their stroking hands.
Her father gave her grass; the grass she took,
And licked his palms, and cast a piteous look,
And in the language of her eyes she spoke.
She would have told her name, and asked relief,
But, wanting words, in tears she tells her grief;
Which with her foot she makes him understand,
And prints the name of Io in the sand.
Ah wretched me! her mournful father cried;
She, with a sigh, to "wretched me!" replied.
About her milk-white neck his arms he threw,
And wept, and then these tender words ensue.
And art thou she, whom I have sought around
The world, and have at length so sadly found?
So found, is worse than lost: with mutual words
Thou answerest not, no voice thy tongue affords;
But sighs are deeply drawn from out thy breast,
And speech, denied, by lowing is expressed.
Unknowing, I prepared thy bridal bed;
With empty hopes of happy issue fed.
But now the husband of a herd must be
Thy mate, and bellowing sons thy progeny.
Oh, were I mortal, death might bring relief!
But now my god-head but extends my grief;
Prolongs my woes, of which no end I see,
And makes me curse my immortality.—

More had he said, but fearful of her stay,
The starry guardian drove his charge away,
To some fresh pasture; on a hilly height
He sat himself, and kept her still in sight.

The Eyes of Argus transformed into a Peacock's Train.

Now Jove no longer could her sufferings bear;
But called in haste his airy messenger,
The son of Maïa, with severe decree
To kill the keeper, and to set her free.
With all his harness soon the god was sped;
His flying hat was fastened on his head;
Wings on his heels were hung, and in his hand
He holds the virtue of the snaky wand.
The liquid air his moving pinions wound,
And, in the moment, shoot him on the ground.
Before he came in sight, the crafty god
His wings dismissed, but still retained his rod:
That sleep-procuring wand wise Hermes took,
But made it seem to sight a shepherd's hook.
With this he did a herd of goats controul;
Which by the way he met, and slyly stole.
Clad like a country swain, he piped and sung;
And, playing, drove his jolly troop along.
With pleasure Argus the musician heeds;
But wonders much at those new vocal reeds.
And,—Whosoe'er thou art, my friend, said he,
Up hither drive thy goats, and play by me;
This hill has brouze for them, and shade for thee.
The god, who was with ease induced to climb,
Began discourse to pass away the time;
And still, betwixt, his tuneful pipe he plies,
And watched his hour, to close the keeper's eyes.

With much ado, he partly kept awake;
Not suffering all his eyes repose to take;
And asked the stranger, who did reeds invent,
And whence began so rare an instrument.

The Transformation of Syrinx into Reeds.

Then Hermes thus;—A nymph of late there was,
Whose heavenly form her fellows did surpass;
The pride and joy of fair Arcadia's plains,
Beloved by deities, adored by swains;
Syrinx her name, by Sylvans oft pursued,
As oft she did the lustful gods delude:
The rural and the woodland powers disdained;
With Cynthia hunted, and her rites maintained;
Like Phœbe clad, even Phœbe's self she seems,
So tall, so straight, such well-proportioned limbs:
The nicest eye did no distinction know,
But that the goddess bore a golden bow;
Distinguished thus, the sight she cheated too.
Descending from Lycæus, Pan admires
The matchless nymph, and burns with new desires.
A crown of pine upon his head he wore;
And thus began her pity to implore.
But ere he thus began, she took her flight
So swift, she was already out of sight;
Nor stayed to hear the courtship of the god,
But bent her course to Ladon's gentle flood;
There by the river stopt, and, tired before,
Relief from water-nymphs her prayers implore.
Now while the lustful god, with speedy pace,
Just thought to strain her in a strict embrace,
He fills his arms with reeds, new rising on the place.
And while he sighs his ill success to find,
The tender canes were shaken by the wind;

And breathed a mournful air, unheard before,
That, much surprising Pan, yet pleased him more.
Admiring this new music, thou, he said,
Who canst not be the partner of my bed,
At least shall be the consort of my mind,
And often, often, to my lips be joined.
He formed the reeds, proportioned as they are;
Unequal in their length, and waxed with care,
They still retain the name of his ungrateful fair.
While Hermes piped, and sung, and told his tale,
The keeper's winking eyes began to fail,
And drowsy slumber on the lids to creep,
Till all the watchman was at length asleep.
Then soon the god his voice and song suppress,
And with his powerful rod confirmed his rest;
Without delay his crooked falchion drew,
And at one fatal stroke the keeper slew.
Down from the rock fell the dissevered head,
Opening its eyes in death, and falling bled;
And marked the passage with a crimson trail:
Thus Argus lies in pieces, cold and pale;
And all his hundred eyes, with all their light,
Are closed at once, in one perpetual night.
These Juno takes, that they no more may fail,
And spreads them in her peacock's gaudy tail.
Impatient to revenge her injured bed,
She wreaks her anger on her rival's head;
With furies frights her from her native home,
And drives her gadding round the world to roam:
Nor ceased her madness and her flight, before
She touched the limits of the Pharian shore.
At length, arriving on the banks of Nile,
Wearied with length of ways, and worn with toil,
She laid her down; and leaning on her knees,
Invoked the cause of all her miseries;
And cast her languishing regards above,
For help from heaven, and her ungrateful Jove.

She sighed, she wept, she lowed; 'twas all she could;
And with unkindness seemed to tax the god.
Last, with an humble prayer, she begged repose,
Or death at least to finish all her woes.
Jove heard her vows, and with a flattering look,
In her behalf to jealous Juno spoke.
He cast his arms about her neck, and said;
Dame, rest secure; no more thy nuptial bed
This nymph shall violate; by Styx I swear,
And every oath that binds the Thunderer.
The goddess was appeased; and at the word
Was Io to her former shape restored.
The rugged hair began to fall away;
The sweetness of her eyes did only stay,
Though not so large; her crooked horns decrease;
The wideness of her jaws and nostrils cease;
Her hoofs to hands return, in little space;
The five long taper fingers take their place;
And nothing of the heifer now is seen,
Beside the native whiteness of her skin.
Erected on her feet, she walks again,
And two the duty of the four sustain.
She tries her tongue, her silence softly breaks,
And fears her former lowings when she speaks:
A goddess now through all the Egyptian state,
And served by priests, who in white linen wait.
Her son was Epaphus, at length believed
The son of Jove, and as a god received.
With sacrifice adored, and public prayers,
He common temples with his mother shares.
Equal in years, and rival in renown
With Epaphus, the youthful Phaeton
Like honour claims, and boasts his sire the Sun.
His haughty looks, and his assuming air,
The son of Isis could no longer bear;
Thou tak'st thy mother's word too far, said he,
And hast usurped thy boasted pedigree.

Go, base pretender to a borrowed name!
Thus taxed, he blushed with anger, and with shame;
But shame repressed his rage: the daunted youth
Soon seeks his mother, and enquires the truth.
Mother, said he, this infamy was thrown
By Epaphus on you, and me your son.
He spoke in public, told it to my face,
Nor durst I vindicate the dire disgrace:
Even I, the bold, the sensible of wrong,
Restrained by shame, was forced to hold my tongue;
To hear an open slander, is a curse;
But not to find an answer, is a worse.
If I am heaven-begot, assert your son
By some sure sign, and make my father known,
To right my honour, and redeem your own.
He said, and, saying, cast his arms about
Her neck, and begged her to resolve the doubt.
'Tis hard to judge if Climené were moved
More by his prayer, whom she so dearly loved,
Or more with fury fired, to find her name
Traduced, and made the sport of common fame.
She stretched her arms to heaven, and fixed her eyes
On that fair planet that adorns the skies;
Now by those beams, said she, whose holy fires
Consume my breast, and kindle my desires;
By him who sees us both, and cheers our sight,
By him, the public minister of light,
I swear that Sun begot thee; if I lie,
Let him his cheerful influence deny;
Let him no more this perjured creature see,
And shine on all the world but only me.
If still you doubt your mother's innocence,
His eastern mansion is not far from hence;
With little pains you to his levee go,
And from himself your parentage may know.—
With joy the ambitious youth his mother heard,
And, eager for the journey, soon prepared.

He longs the world beneath him to survey,
To guide the chariot, and to give the day.
From Meroe's burning sands he bends his course,
Nor less in India feels his father's force;
His travel urging, till he came in sight,
And saw the palace by the purple light.

MELEAGER AND ATALANTA,

OUT OF THE EIGHTH BOOK OF

OVID'S METAMORPHOSES.

CONNECTION TO THE FORMER STORY.

Ovid, having told how Theseus had freed Athens from the tribute of children, which was imposed on them by Minos king of Crete, by killing the Minotaur, here makes a digression to the story of Meleager and Atalanta, which is one of the most inartificial connections in all the Metamorphoses; for he only says, that Theseus obtained such honour from that combat, that all Greece had recourse to him in their necessities; and, amongst others, Calydon, though the hero of that country, prince Meleager, was then living.

From him the Caledonians sought relief;
Though valiant Meleagrus was their chief.
The cause, a boar, who ravaged far and near;
Of Cynthia's wrath, the avenging minister.
For Oenius with autumnal plenty blessed,
By gifts to heaven his gratitude expressed;
Culled sheafs, to Ceres; to Lyæus, wine;
To Pan and Pales, offered sheep and kine;
And fat of olives to Minerva's shrine.

Beginning from the rural gods, his hand
Was liberal to the powers of high command;
Each deity in every kind was blessed,
Till at Diana's fane the invidious honour ceased.
Wrath touches even the gods; the Queen of Night,
Fired with disdain, and jealous of her right,
Unhonoured though I am, at least, said she,
Not unrevenged that impious act shall be.
Swift as the word, she sped the boar away,
With charge on those devoted fields to prey.
No larger bulls the Egyptian pastures feed,
And none so large Sicilian meadows breed:
His eye-balls glare with fire, suffused with blood;
His neck shoots up a thick-set thorny wood;
His bristled back a trench impaled appears,
And stands erected, like a field of spears;
Froth fills his chaps, he sends a grunting sound,
And part he churns, and part befoams the ground;
For tusks with Indian elephants he strove,
And Jove's own thunder from his mouth he drove.
He burns the leaves; the scorching blast invades
The tender corn, and shrivels up the blades;
Or, suffering not their yellow beards to rear,
He trampies down the spikes, and intercepts the year.
In vain the barns expect their promised load,
Nor barns at home, nor ricks are heaped abroad;
In vain the hinds the threshing-floor prepare,
And exercise their flails in empty air.
With olives ever green the ground is strowed,
And grapes ungathered shed their generous blood.
Amid the fold he rages, nor the sheep
Their shepherds, nor the grooms their bulls, can keep.
From fields to walls the frighted rabble run,
Nor think themselves secure within the town;
Till Melegarus, and his chosen crew,
Contemn the danger, and the praise pursue.

Fair Leda's twins, (in time to stars decreed,)
One fought on foot, one curbed the fiery steed;
Then issued forth famed Jason after these,
Who manned the foremost ship that sailed the seas;
Then Theseus, joined with bold Pirithous, came;
A single concord in a double name:
The Thestian sons, Idas, who swiftly ran,
And Ceneus, once a woman, now a man.
Lynceus, with eagle's eyes, and lion's heart;
Leucippus, with his never-erring dart;
Acastus, Phileus, Phœnix, Telamon,
Echion, Lelex, and Eurytion,
Achilles' father, and great Phocus' son;
Dryas the fierce, and Hippasus the strong,
With twice-old Iolas, and Nestor then but young;
Laertes active, and Ancæus bold;
Mopsus the sage, who future things foretold;
And t'other seer, * yet by his wife unsold.
A thousand others of immortal fame;
Among the rest, fair Atalanta came,
Grace of the woods: a diamond buckle bound
Her vest behind, that else had flow'd upon the ground,
And shew'd her buskin'd legs; her head was bare,
But for her native ornament of hair,
Which in a simple knot was tied above,—
Sweet negligence, unheeded bait of love!
Her sounding quiver on her shoulder tied,
One hand a dart, and one a bow supplied.
Such was her face, as in a nymph displayed
A fair fierce boy, or in a boy betrayed
The blushing beauties of a modest maid.
The Caledonian chief at once the dame
Beheld, at once his heart received the flame,
With heavens averse. O happy youth, he cried,
For whom thy fates reserve so fair a bribe!

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* Amphialus.

He sighed, and had no leisure more to say;
His honour called his eyes another way,
And force him to pursue the now neglected prey.
There stood a forest on the mountain's brow,
Which overlooked the shaded plains below;
No sounding axe presumed those trees to bite,
Coeval with the world, a venerable sight.
The heroes there arrived, some spread around
The toils, some search the footsteps on the ground.
Some from the chains the faithful dogs unbound.
Of action eager, and intent on thought,
The chiefs their honourable danger sought:
A valley stood below; the common drain
Of waters from above and falling rain;
The bottom was a moist and marshy ground,
Whose edges were with bending osiers crowned;
The knotty bulrush next in order stood,
And all within, of reeds a trembling wood.
From hence the boar was roused, and sprung amain,
Like lightning sudden on the warrior-train;
Beats down the trees before him, shakes the ground.
The forest echoes to the crackling sound;
Shout the fierce youth, and clamours ring around.
All stood with their protended spears prepared,
With broad steel heads the brandished weapons glared.
The beast impetuous with his tusks aside
Deals glancing wounds; the fearful dogs divide;
All spend their mouth aloft, but none abide.
Echion threw the first, but missed his mark,
And stuck his boar-spear on a maple's bark.
Then Jason; and his javelin seemed to take,
But failed with over-force, and whizzed above his back.
Mopsus was next; but, ere he threw, addressed
To Phœbus thus: O patron, help thy priest!
If I adore, and ever have adored
Thy power divine, thy present aid afford,

That I may reach the beast!—The god allowed
His prayer, and, smiling, gave him what he could:
He reached the savage, but no blood he drew;
Dian unarmed the javelin as it flew.
This chafed the boar, his nostrils flames expire,
And his red eye-balls roll with living fire.
Whirled from a sling, or from an engine thrown,
Amidst the foes so flies a mighty stone,
As flew the beast: the left wing put to flight,
The chiefs o'erborne, he rushes on the right.
Empalamos and Pelagon he laid
In dust, and next to death, but for their fellows' aid.
Onesimus fared worse, prepared to fly;
The fatal fang drove deep within his thigh,
And cut the nerves; the nerves no more sustain
The bulk; the bulk unprop'd, falls headlong on the plain.
Nestor had failed the fall of Troy to see,
But, leaning on his lance, he vaulted on a tree;
Then, gathering up his feet, looked down with fear,
And thought his monstrous foe was still too near.
Against a stump his tusk the monster grinds,
And in the sharpened edge new vigour finds;
Then, trusting to his arms, young Othrys found,
And ranched his hips with one continued wound.
Now Leda's twins, the future stars, appear;
White were their habits, white their horses were;
Conspicuous both, and both in act to throw,
Their trembling lances brandished at the foe:
Nor had they missed; but he to thickets fled,
Concealed from aiming spears, not pervious to the steed.
But Telamon rushed in, and happed to meet
A rising root, that held his fastened feet;
So down he fell, whom, sprawling on the ground,
His brother from the wooden gyves unbound.

Meantime the virgin-huntress was not slow
To expel the shaft from her contracted bow.
Beneath his ear the fastened arrow stood,
And from the wound appeared the trickling blood.
She blushed for joy: But Meleagrus raised
His voice with loud applause, and the fair archer praised.
He was the first to see, and first to show
His friends the marks of the successful blow.
Nor shall thy valour want the praises due,
He said;—a virtuous envy seized the crew.
They shout; the shouting animates their hearts,
And all at once employ their thronging darts;
But out of order thrown, in air they join,
And multitude makes frustrate the design.
With both his hands the proud Ancæus takes,
And flourishes his double biting axe:
Then forward to his fate, he took a stride
Before the rest, and to his fellows cried,—
Give place, and mark the difference, if you can,
Between a woman-warrior and a man;
The boar is doomed; nor, though Diana lend
Her aid, Diana can her beast defend.—
Thus boasted he; then stretched, on tiptoe stood,
Secure to make his empty promise good;
But the more wary beast prevents the blow,
And upward rips the groin of his audacious foe.
Ancæus falls; his bowels from the wound
Rush out, and clotted blood distains the ground.
Pirithous, no small portion of the war,
Pressed on, and shook his lance; to whom from far,
Thus Theseus cried: O stay, my better part,
My more than mistress; of my heart, the heart!
The strong may fight aloof: Ancæus tried
His force too near, and by presuming died.—
He said, and, while he spake, his javelin threw;
Hissing in air, the unerring weapon flew;

But on an arm of oak, that stood betwixt
The marksman and the mark, his lance he fixt.
Once more bold Jason threw, but failed to wound
The boar, and slew an undeserving hound;
And through the dog the dart was nailed to ground.
Two spears from Meleager's hand were sent,
With equal force, but various in the event;
The first was fixed in earth, the second stood
On the boar's bristled back, and deeply drank his blood.
Now, while the tortured savage turns around,
And flings about his foam, impatient of the wound,
The wound's great author, close at hand, provokes
His rage, and plies him with redoubled strokes;
Wheels as he wheels, and with his pointed dart
Explores the nearest passage to his heart.
Quick, and more quick, he spins in giddy gyres,
Then falls, and in much foam his soul expires.
This act with shouts heaven high the friendly band
Applaud, and strain in theirs the victor's hand.
Then all approach the slain with vast surprise,
Admire on what a breadth of earth he lies;
And, scarce secure, reach out their spears afar,
And blood their points, to prove their partnership of war.
But he, the conquering chief, his foot impressed
On the strong neck of that destructive beast;
And gazing on the nymph with ardent eyes,
Accept, said he, fair Nonacrine, my prize;
And, though inferior, suffer me to join
My labours, and my part of praise, with thine.—
At this presents her with the tusky head
And chine, with rising bristles roughly spread.
Glad, she received the gift; and seemed to take
With double pleasure, for the giver's sake.
The rest were seized with sullen discontent,
And a deaf murmur through the squadron went:

All envied; but the Thestyan brethren showed
The least respect, and thus they vent their spleen aloud:
Lay down those honoured spoils, nor think to share,
Weak woman as thou art, the prize of war;
Ours is the title, thine a foreign claim,
Since Meleagrus from our lineage came.
Trust not thy beauty; but restore the prize,
Which he, besotted on that face and eyes,
Would rend from us.—At this, inflamed with spite,
From her they snatch the gift, from him the giver's right.

But soon the impatient prince his faulchion drew,
And cried,—Ye robbers of another's due,
Now learn the difference, at your proper cost,
Betwixt true valour, and an empty boast.—
At this advanced, and, sudden as the word,
In proud Plexippus' bosom plunged the sword:
Toxeus amazed, and with amazement slow,
Or to revenge, or ward the coming blow,
Stood doubting; and, while doubting thus he stood,
Received the steel bathed in his brother's blood.

Pleased with the first, unknown the second news,
Althæa to the temples pays their dues
For her son's conquest; when at length appear
Her grisly brethren stretched upon the bier:
Pale, at the sudden sight, she changed her cheer,
And with her cheer her robes; but hearing tell
The cause, the manner, and by whom they fell,
'Twas grief no more, or grief and rage were one
Within her soul; at last 'twas rage alone;
Which burning upwards, in succession dries
The tears that stood considering in her eyes.

There lay a log unlighted on the earth:
When she was labouring in the throes of birth
For the unborn chief, the Fatal Sisters came,
And raised it up, and tossed it on the flame;

Then on the rock a scanty measure place
Of vital flax, and turned the wheel apace;
And turning sung,—To this red brand and thee,
O new-born babe, we give an equal destiny;
So vanished out of view. The frighted dame
Sprung hasty from her bed, and quenched the flame;
The log, in secret locked, she kept with care,
And that, while thus preserved, preserved her heir.
This brand she now produced; and first she strows
The hearth with heaps of chips, and after blows;
Thrice heaved her hand, and heaved, she thrice repressed;
The sister and the mother long contest,
Two doubtful titles in one tender breast;
And now her eyes and cheeks with fury glow,
Now pale her cheeks, her eyes with pity flow;
Now lowring looks presage approaching storms,
And now prevailing love her face reforms:
Resolved, she doubts again; the tears, she dried
With blushing rage, are by new tears supplied;
And, as a ship, which winds and waves assail,
Now with the current drives, now with the gale,
Both opposite, and neither long prevail,
She feels a double force; by turns obeys
The imperious tempest, and the impetuous seas:
So fares Althæa's mind; first she relents
With pity, of that pity then repents:
Sister and mother long the scales divide,
But the beam nodded on the sister's side.
Sometimes she softly sighed, then roared aloud;
But sighs were stifled in the cries of blood.
The pious impious wretch at length decreed,
To please her brothers' ghosts, her son should bleed;
And when the funeral flames began to rise,
Receive, she said, a sister's sacrifice;

A mother's bowels burn:—high in her hand,
Thus while she spoke, she held the fatal brand;
Then thrice before the kindled pile she bowed,
And the three Furies thrice invoked aloud:—
Come, come, revenging sisters, come and view
A sister paying her dead brothers' due;
A crime I punish, and a crime commit;
But blood for blood, and death for death, is fit:
Great crimes must be with greater crimes repaid,
And second funerals on the former laid.
Let the whole household in one ruin fall,
And may Diana's curse o'ertake us all.
Shall fate to happy Œneus still allow
One son, while Thestius stands deprived of two?
Better three lost, than one unpunished go.
Take then, dear ghosts, (while yet, admitted new
In hell, you wait my duty,) take your due;
A costly offering on your tomb is laid,
When with my blood the price of yours is paid.
Ah! whither am I hurried? Ah! forgive,
Ye shades, and let your sister's issue live:
A mother cannot give him death; though he
Deserves it, he deserves it not from me.
Then shall the unpunished wretch insult the slain,
Triumphant live? not only live, but reign?
While you, thin shades, the sport of winds, are tost
O'er dreary plains, or tread the burning coast!
I cannot, cannot bear; 'tis past, 'tis done;
Perish this impious, this detested son;
Perish his sire, and perish I withal;
And let the houses heir, and the hoped kingdom fall.
Where is the mother fled, her pious love,
And where the pains with which ten months I strove!
Ah! hadst thou died, my son, in infant years,
Thy little hearse hadst been bedewed with tears.
Thou livest by me; to me thy breath resign;
Mine is the merit, the demerit thine.

Thy life by double title I require;
Once given at birth, and once preserved from fire:
One murder pay, or add one murder more,
And me to them who fell by thee restore.
I would, but cannot: my son's image stands
Before my sight;—and now their angry hands
My brothers hold, and vengeance these exact;
This pleads compassion, and repents the fact.
He pleads in vain, and I pronounce his doom:
My brothers, though unjustly, shall o'ercome;
But having paid their injured ghosts their due,
My son requires my death, and mine shall his pursue.
At this, for the last time, she lifts her hand,
Averts her eyes, and half-unwilling drops the brand.
The brand, amid the flaming fuel thrown,
Or drew, or seemed to draw, a dying groan;
The fires themselves but faintly licked their prey,
Then loathed their impious food, and would have shrunk away.
Just then the hero cast a doleful cry,
And in those absent flames began to fry;
The blind contagion raged within his veins;
But he, with manly patience, bore his pains;
He feared not fate, but only grieved to die
Without an honest wound, and by a death so dry.
Happy Ancæus, thrice aloud he cried,
With what becoming fate in arms he died!
Then called his brothers, sisters, sire, around,
And her to whom his nuptial vows were bound;
Perhaps his mother; a long sigh he drew,
And, his voice failing, took his last adieu;
For, as the flames augment, and as they stay
At their full height, then languish to decay,
They rise, and sink by fits; at last they soar
In one bright blaze, and then descend no more:
Just so his inward heats, at height, impair,
Till the last burning breath shoots out the soul in air.

Now lofty Calydon in ruins lies;
All ages, all degrees, unsluice their eyes;
And heaven and earth resound with murmurs, groans, and cries.
Matrons and maidens beat their breasts, and tear
Their habits, and root up their scattered hair.
The wretched father, father now no more,
With sorrow sunk, lies prostrate on the floor;
Deforms his hoary locks with dust obscene,
And curses age, and loathes a life prolonged with pain.
By steel her stubborn soul his mother freed,
And punished on herself her impious deed.
Had I an hundred tongues, a wit so large
As could their hundred offices discharge;
Had Phœbus all his Helicon bestowed,
In all the streams inspiring all the god;
Those tongues, that wit, those streams, that god in vain
Would offer to describe his sisters' pain;
They beat their breasts with many a bruising blow,
Till they turn livid, and corrupt the snow.
The corps they cherish, while the corps remains,
And exercise and rub with fruitless pains;
And when to funeral flames 'tis borne away,
They kiss the bed on which the body lay;
And when those funeral flames no longer burn,
The dust composed within a pious urn,
Even in that urn their brother they confess,
And hug it in their arms, and to their bosoms press.
His tomb is raised; then, stretched along the ground,
Those living monuments his tomb surround;
Even to his name, inscribed, their tears they pay,
Till tears and kisses wear his name away.
But Cynthia now had all her fury spent,
Not with less ruin, than a race, content;

Excepting Gorge, perished all the seed,
And her whom heaven for Hercules decreed.
Satiate at last, no longer she pursued
The weeping sisters; but with wings endued,
And horny beaks, and sent to flit in air.
Who yearly round the tomb in feathered flocks repair.

BAUCIS AND PHILEMON.

OUT OF THE EIGHTH BOOK OF

OVID'S METAMORPHOSES.

The author, pursuing the deeds of Theseus, relates how he, with his friend Pirithous, were invited by Achelous, the River-God, to stay with him, till his waters were abated. Achelous entertains them with a relation of his own love to Perimele, who was changed into an island by Neptune, at his request. Pirithous, being an Atheist, derides the legend, and denies the power of the Gods to work that miracle. Lelex, another companion of Theseus, to confirm the story of Achelous, relates another metamorphosis, of Baucis and Philemon into trees; of which he was partly an eye-witness.

Thus Achelous ends; his audience hear
With admiration, and, admiring, fear
The powers of heaven; except Ixion's son,
Who laughed at all the gods, believed in none;
He shook his impious head, and thus replies,—
These legends are no more than pious lies;
You attribute too much to heavenly sway,
To think they give us forms, and take away.—

The rest, of better minds, their sense declared
Against this doctrine, and with horror heard.
Then Lelex rose, an old experienced man,
And thus with sober gravity began;—
Heaven's power is infinite; earth, air, and sea,
The manufacture mass, the making power obey.
By proof to clear your doubt;—In Phrygian ground
Two neighbouring trees, with walls encompassed round,
Stand on a moderate rise, with wonder shown,
One a hard oak, a softer linden one;
I saw the place and them, by Pittheus sent
To Phrygian realms, my grandsire's government.
Not far from thence is seen a lake, the haunt
Of coots, and of the fishing cormorant.
Here Jove with Hermes came; but in disguise
Of mortal men concealed their deities;
One laid aside his thunder, one his rod,
And many toilsome steps together trod;
For harbour at a thousand doors they knocked,
Not one of all the thousand but was locked;
At last an hospitable house they found,
A homely shed; the roof, not far from ground,
Was thatched with reeds and straw together bound.
There Baucis and Philemon lived, and there
Had lived long married, and a happy pair;
Now old in love; though little was their store,
Inured to want, their poverty they bore,
Nor aimed at wealth, professing to be poor.
For master or for servant here to call,
Was all alike, where only two were all.
Command was none, where equal love was paid,
Or rather both commanded, both obeyed.
From lofty roofs the gods repulsed before,
Now stooping, entered through the little door;

The man their hearty welcome first expressed,
A common settle * drew for either guest,
Inviting each his weary limbs to rest.
But, ere they sat, officious Baucis lays
Two cushions stuffed with straw, the seat to raise;
Coarse, but the best she had; then takes the load
Of ashes from the hearth, and spreads abroad
The living coals, and, lest they should expire,
With leaves and barks she feeds her infant-fire;
It smokes, and then with trembling breath she blows,
Till in a cheerful blaze the flames arose.
With brushwood and with chips she strengthens these,
And adds at last the boughs of rotten trees.
The fire thus formed, she sets the kettle on,
Like burnished gold the little seether shone;
Next took the coleworts which her husband got
From his own ground, a small well-watered spot;
She stripped the stalks of all their leaves; the best
She culled, and then with handy care she dressed.
High o'er the hearth a chine of bacon hung;
Good old Philemon seized it with a prong,
And from the sooty rafter drew it down,
Then cut a slice, but scarce enough for one;
Yet a large portion of a little store,
Which, for their sake alone, he wished weer more.
This in the pot he plunged without delay,
To tame the flesh, and drain the salt away.
The time between, before the fire they sat,
And shortened the delay by pleasing chat.
A beam there was, on which a beechen pail
Hung by the handle, on a driven nail;

* Called in more modern times a *settee*. The old word, *settle*, occurs in the first part of Bunyan's "Pilgrim's Progress;" where Christian, at the bottom of the Hill of Difficulty, finds an arbour with a *settle*.

This filled with water, gently warmed, they set
Before their guests; in this they bathed their feet,
And after with clean towels dried their sweat:
This done, the host produced the genial bed,
Sallow the foot, the borders, and the sted,
Which with no costly coverlet they spread,
But coarse old garments; yet such robes as these
They laid alone, at feasts, on holidays.
The good old housewife, tucking up her gown,
The table sets; the invited gods lie down.
The trivet-table of a foot was lame,
A blot which prudent Baucis overcame,
Who thrust beneath the limping leg a sherd,
So was the mended board exactly reared;
Then rubbed it o'er with newly gathered mint,
A wholesome herb, that breathed a grateful scent.
Pallas * began the feast, where first was seen
The party-coloured olive, black and green;
Autumnal cornels next in order served,
In lees of wine well pickled and preserved;
A garden-sallad was the third supply,
Of endive, radishes, and succory;
Then curds and cream, the flower of country fare,
And new-laid eggs, which Baucis' busy care
Turned by a gentle fire, and roasted rare.
All these in earthen-ware were served to board;
And, next in place, an earthen pitcher, stored
With liquor of the best the cottage could afford.
This was the table's ornament and pride,
With figures wrought; like pages at his side
Stood beechen bowls; and these were shining clean,
Varnished with wax without, and lined within.
By this the boiling kettle had prepared,
And to the table sent the smoking lard;

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* To whom the olive was sacred.

On which, with eager appetite, they dine,
A savoury bit, that served to relish wine;
The wine itself was suiting to the rest,
Still working in the must, and lately pressed.
The second course succeeds like that before,
Plumbs, apples, nuts, and, of their wintry-store,
Dry figs and grapes, and wrinkled dates were set
In canisters, to enlarge the little treat;
All these a milk-white honey-comb surround,
Which in the midst the country-banquet crowned.
But the kind hosts their entertainment grace
With hearty welcome, and an open face;
In all they did, you might discern with ease
A willing mind, and a desire to please.
Mean time the beechen bowls went round, and still,
Though often emptied, were observed to fill;
Filled without hands, and of their own accord
Ran without feet, and danced about the board.
Devotion seized the pair, to see the feast
With wine, and of no common grape, increased;
And up they held their hands, and fell to prayer,
Excusing, as they could, their country fare.
One goose they had, 'twas all they could allow,
A wakeful sentry, and on duty now,
Whom to the gods for sacrifice they vow:
Her, with malicious zeal, the couple viewed;
She ran for life, and, limping, they pursued;
Full well the fowl perceived their bad intent,
And would not make her master's compliment;
But, persecuted, to the powers she flies,
And close between the legs of Jove she lies.
He, with a gracious ear, the suppliant heard,
And saved her life; then what he was declared,
And owned the god. The neighbourhood, said he,
Shall justly perish for impiety;
You stand alone exempted; but obey
With speed, and follow where we lead the way;

Leave these accursed, and to the mountain's height
Ascend, nor once look backward in your flight.—
They haste, and what their tardy feet denied,
The trusty staff (their better leg) supplied.
An arrow's flight they wanted to the top,
And there secure, but spent with travel, stop;
Then turn their now no more forbidden eyes :—
Lost in a lake, the floated level lies ;
A watery desert covers all the plains,
Their cot alone, as in an isle, remains :
Wondering, with peeping eyes, while they deplore
Their neighbours' fate, and country now no more,
Their little shed, scarce large enough for two,
Seems, from the ground increased, in height and bulk to grow.
A stately temple shoots within the skies ;
The crotchets of their cot in columns rise ;
The pavement polished marble they behold,
The gates with sculpture graced, the spires and tiles of gold.
Then thus the sire of gods, with looks serene,
Speak thy desire, thou only just of men;
And thou, O woman, only worthy found
To be with such a man in marriage bound.—
Awhile they whisper ; then, to Jove addressed,
Philemon thus prefers their joint request :—
We crave to serve before your sacred shrine,
And offer at your altars rites divine ;
And since not any action of our life
Has been polluted with domestic strife,
We beg one hour of death ; that neither she,
With widow's tears, may live to bury me,
Nor weeping I, with withered arms, may bear
My breathless Baucis to the sepulchre.
The godheads sign their suit. They run their race
In the same tenour all the appointed space ;

Then, when their hour was come, while they relate
These past adventures at the temple-gate,
Old Baucis is by old Philemon seen
Sprouting with sudden leaves of sprightly green;
Old Baucis looked where old Philemon stood,
And saw his lengthened arms a sprouting wood;
New roots their fastened feet begin to bind,
Their bodies stiffen in a rising rind;
Then, ere the bark above their shoulders grew,
They give and take at once their last adieu;
At once, farewell, O faithful spouse, they said;
At once the encroaching rinds their closing lips invade.
Even yet, an ancient Tyanæan shows
A spreading oak, that near a linden grows;
The neighbourhood confirm the prodigy,
Grave men, not vain of tongue, or like to lie.
I saw myself the garlands on their boughs,
And tablets hung for gifts of granted vows;
And offering fresher up, with pious prayer,
The good, said I, are God's peculiar care,
And such as honour heaven, shall heavenly honour share.

THE FABLE OF

IPHIS AND IANTHE.

FROM THE NINTH BOOK OF

OVID'S METAMORPHOSES.

The fame of this, perhaps, through Crete had flown;
But Crete had newer wonders of her own,
In Iphis changed; for near the Gnossian bounds,
As loud report the miracle resounds,
At Phæstus dwelt a man of honest blood,
But meanly born, and not so rich as good,
Esteemed and loved by all the neighbourhood;
Who to his wife, before the time assigned
For child-birth came, thus bluntly spoke his mind:—
If heaven, said Lygdus, will vouchsafe to hear,
I have but two petitions to prefer;
Short pains for thee, for me a son and heir.
Girls cost as many throes in bringing forth;
Beside, when born, the tits are little worth;

Weak puling things, unable to sustain
Their share of labour, and their bread to gain.
If, therefore, thou a creature shalt produce,
Of so great charges, and so little use,
Bear witness, heaven, with what reluctancy,
Her hapless innocence I doom to die.—
He said, and tears the common grief display,
Of him who bade, and her who must obey.
Yet Telethusa still persists, to find
Fit arguments to move a father's mind;
To extend his wishes to a larger scope,
And in one vessel not confine his hope.
Lygdus continues hard; her time drew near,
And she her heavy load could scarcely bear;
When slumbering, in the latter shades of night,
Before the approaches of returning light,
She saw, or thought she saw, before her bed,
A glorious train, and Isis at their head;
Her moony horns were on her forehead placed,
And yellow sheaves her shining temples graced;
A mitre, for a crown, she wore on high;
The dog, and dappled bull, were waiting by;
Osiris, sought along the banks of Nile;
The silent god; the sacred Crocodile;
And, last, a long procession moving on,
With timbrels, that assist the labouring moon.
Her slumbers seemed dispelled, and, broad awake,
She heard a voice, that thus distinctly spake:—
My votary, thy babe from death defend,
Nor fear to save whate'er the gods will send;
Delude with art thy husband's dire decree;
When danger calls, repose thy trust on me;
And know, thou hast not served a thankless deity.—
This promise made, with night the goddess fled;
With joy the woman wakes, and leaves her bed;
Devoutly lifts her spotless hands on high,
And prays the powers their gift to ratify.

Now grinding pains proceed to bearing throes,
Till its own weight the burden did disclose.
'Twas of the beauteous kind, and brought to light
With secrecy, to shun the father's sight.
The indulgent mother did her care employ,
And passed it on her husband for a boy.
The nurse was conscious of the fact alone;
The father paid his vows as for a son;
And called him Iphis, by a common name,
Which either sex with equal right may claim.
Iphis his grandsire was; the wife was pleased,
Of half the fraud by fortune's favour eased;
The doubtful name was used without deceit,
And truth was covered with a pious cheat.
The habit showed a boy, the beauteous face
With manly fierceness mingled female grace.
Now thirteen years of age were swiftly run,
When the fond father thought the time drew on
Of settling in the world his only son.
Ianthe was his choice; so wondrous fair,
Her form alone with Iphis could compare;
A neighbour's daughter of his own degree,
And not more blessed with Fortune's goods than he.
They soon espoused; for they with ease were joined,
Who were before contracted in the mind.
Their age the same, their inclinations too,
And bred together in one school, they grew.
Thus, fatally disposed to mutual fires,
They felt, before they knew, the same desires.
Equal their flame, unequal was their care;
One loved with hope, one languished in despair.
The maid accused the lingering days alone;
For whom she thought a man, she thought her own.
But Iphis bends beneath a greater grief;
As fiercely burns, but hopes for no relief.
E'en her despair adds fuel to her fire;
A maid with madness does a maid desire.

And, scarce refraining tears, Alas, said she,
What issue of my love remains for me!
How wild a passion works within my breast!
With what prodigious flames am I possest!
Could I the care of Providence deserve,
Heaven must destroy me, if it would preserve.
And that's my fate, or sure it would have sent
Some usual evil for my punishment;
Not this unkindly curse; to rage and burn,
Where nature shews no prospect of return.
Nor cows for cows consume with fruitless fire;
Nor mares, when hot, their fellow-mares desire;
The father of the fold supplies his ewes;
The stag through secret woods his hind pursues;
And birds for mates the males of their own species choose.
Her females nature guards from female flame,
And joins two sexes to preserve the game;
Would I were nothing, or not what I am!
Crete, famed for monsters, wanted of her store,
Till my new love produced one monster more.
The daughter of the Sun a bull desired; *
And yet e'en then a male a female fired:
Her passion was extravagantly new;
But mine is much the madder of the two.
To things impossible she was not bent,
But found the means to compass her intent.
To cheat his eyes she took a different shape;
Yet still she gained a lover, and a leap.
Should all the wit of all the world conspire,
Should Dædalus assist my wild desire,
What art can make me able to enjoy,
Or what can change Ianthe to a boy?
Extinguish then thy passion, hopeless maid,
And recollect thy reason for thy aid.

* Pasiphae.

Know what thou art, and love as maidens ought,
And drive these golden wishes from thy thought.
Thou canst not hope thy fond desires to gain;
Where hope is wanting, wishes are in vain.
And yet no guards against our joys conspire;
No jealous husband hinders our desire;
My parents are propitious to my wish,
And she herself consenting to the bliss.
All things concur to prosper our design;
All things to prosper any love but mine.
And yet I never can enjoy the fair;
'Tis past the power of heaven to grant my prayer.
Heaven has been kind, as far as heaven can be;
Our parents with our own desires agree;
But nature, stronger than the gods above,
Refuses her assistance to my love:
She sets the bar that causes all my pain;
One gift refused makes all their bounty vain.
And now the happy day is just at hand,
To bind our hearts in Hymen's holy band;
Our hearts, but not our bodies; thus accursed,
In midst of water I complain of thirst.
Why comest thou, Juno, to these barren rites,
To bless a bed defrauded of delights?
And why should Hymen lift his torch on high,
To see two brides in cold embraces lie?—
  Thus love-sick Iphis her vain passion mourns;
With equal ardour fair Ianthe burns;
Invoking Hymen's name, and Juno's power,
To speed the work, and haste the happy hour.
  She hopes, while Telethusa fears the day,
And strives to interpose some new delay;
Now feigns a sickness, now is in a fright
For this bad omen, or that boding sight.
But having done whate'er she could devise,
And emptied all her magazine of lies,

The time approached ; the next ensuing day
The fatal secret must to light betray.
Then Telethusa had recourse to prayer,
She and her daughter with dishevelled hair;
Trembling with fear, great Isis they adored,
Embraced her altar, and her aid implored.
  Fair queen, who dost on fruitful Egypt smile,
Who sway'st the sceptre of the Pharian isle,
And seven-fold falls of disemboguing Nile;
Relieve, in this our last distress, she said,
A suppliant mother, and a mournful maid.
Thou, goddess, thou wert present to my sight;
Revealed I saw thee by thy own fair light;
I saw thee in my dream, as now I see,
With all thy marks of awful majesty;
The glorious train that compassed thee around;
And heard the hollow timbrel's holy sound.
Thy words I noted, which I still retain;
Let not thy sacred oracles be vain.
That Iphis lives, that I myself am free
From shame and punishment, I owe to thee.
On thy protection all our hopes depend;
Thy counsel saved us, let thy power defend.
  Her tears pursued her words, and, while she spoke,
The goddess nodded, and her altar shook;
The temple doors, as with a blast of wind,
Were heard to clap; the lunar horns, that bind
The brows of Isis, cast a blaze around;
The trembling timbrel made a murmuring sound.
  Some hopes these happy omens did impart;
Forth went the mother with a beating heart,
Not much in fear, nor fully satisfied;
But Iphis followed with a larger stride:
The whiteness of her skin forsook her face;
Her looks emboldened with an awful grace;
Her features and her strength together grew,
And her long hair to curling locks withdrew.

Her sparkling eyes with manly vigour shone;
Big was her voice, audacious was her tone.
The latent parts, at length revealed, began
To shoot, and spread, and burnish into man.
The maid becomes a youth;—no more delay
Your vows, but look, and confidently pay.—
Their gifts the parents to the temple bear;
The votive tables this inscription wear;—
Iphis, the man, has to the goddess paid
The vows, that Iphis offered when a maid.
Now when the star of day had shown his face,
Venus and Juno with their presence grace
The nuptial rites, and Hymen from above
Descended to complete their happy love;
The gods of marriage lend their mutual aid,
And the warm youth enjoys the lovely maid.

PYGMALION AND THE STATUE.

FROM THE TENTH BOOK OF

OVID'S METAMORPHOSES.

The Propœtides, for their impudent behaviour, being turned into stone by Venus, Pygmalion, Prince of Cyprus, detested all women for their sake, and resolved never to marry. He falls in love with a statue of his own making, which is changed into a maid, whom he marries. One of his descendants is Cinyras, the father of Myrrha; the daughter incestuously loves her own father, for which she is changed into a tree, which bears her name. These two stories immediately follow each other, and are admirably well connected.

Pygmalion, loathing their lascivious life,
Abhorred all womankind, but most a wife;
So single chose to live, and shunned to wed,
Well pleased to want a consort of his bed.
Yet fearing idleness, the nurse of ill,
In sculpture exercised his happy skill;
And carved in ivory such a maid, so fair,
As nature could not with his art compare,
Were she to work; but in her own defence,
Must take her pattern here, and copy hence.

Pleased with his idol, he commends, admires,
Adores; and last, the thing adored desires.
A very virgin in her face was seen,
And, had she moved, a living maid had been:
One would have thought she could have stirred, but strove
With modesty, and was ashamed to move.
Art, hid with art, so well performed the cheat,
It caught the carver with his own deceit.
He knows 'tis madness, yet he must adore,
And still the more he knows it, loves the more;
The flesh, or what so seems, he touches oft,
Which feels so smooth, that he believes it soft.
Fired with this thought, at once he strained the breast,
And on the lips a burning kiss impressed.
'Tis true, the hardened breast resists the gripe,
And the cold lips return a kiss unripe;
But when, retiring back, he looked again,
To think it ivory was a thought too mean;
So would believe she kissed, and courting more,
Again embraced her naked body o'er;
And, straining hard the statue, was afraid
His hands had made a dint, and hurt the maid;
Explored her, limb by limb, and feared to find
So rude a gripe had left a livid mark behind.
With flattery now he seeks her mind to move,
And now with gifts, the powerful bribes of love:
He furnishes her closet first; and fills
The crowded shelves with rarities of shells;
Adds orient pearls, which from the conchs he drew,
And all the sparkling stones of various hue;
And parrots, imitating human tongue, *
And singing-birds in silver cages hung;

* The parrots are of Dryden's introduction.

And every fragrant flower, and odorous green,
Were sorted well, with lumps of amber laid between;
Rich fashionable robes her person deck;
Pendents her ears, and pearls adorn her neck;
Her tapered fingers too with rings are graced,
And an embroidered zone surrounds her slender waste.
Thus like a queen arrayed, so richly dressed,
Beauteous she showed, but naked showed the best.
Then from the floor he raised a royal bed,
With coverings of Sidonian purple spread;
The solemn rites performed, he calls her bride,
With blandishments invites her to his side,
And as she were with vital sense possessed,
Her head did on a plumy pillow rest.

The feast of Venus came, a solemn day,
To which the Cypriots due devotion pay;
With gilded horns the milk-white heifers led,
Slaughtered before the sacred altars, bled;
Pygmalion, offering, first approached the shrine,
And then with prayers implored the powers divine;—
Almighty Gods, if all we mortals want,
If all we can require, be yours to grant,
Make this fair statue mine,—he would have said,
But changed his words for shame, and only prayed,
Give me the likeness of my ivory maid!—

The golden Goddess, present at the prayer,
Well knew he meant the inanimated fair,
And gave the sign of granting his desire;
For thrice in cheerful flames ascends the fire.
The youth, returning to his mistress, hies,
And impudent in hope, with ardent eyes,
And beating breast, by the dear statue lies.
He kisses her white lips, renews the bliss,
And looks and thinks they redden at the kiss;
He thought them warm before: nor longer stays,
But next his hand on her hard bosom lays;

Hard as it was, beginning to relent,
It seemed the breast beneath his fingers bent;
He felt again, his fingers made a print,
'Twas flesh, but flesh so firm, it rose against the dint.
The pleasing task he fails not to renew;
Soft, and more soft at every touch it grew;
Like pliant wax, when chafing hands reduce
The former mass to form, and frame to use.
He would believe, but yet is still in pain,
And tries his argument of sense again,
Presses the pulse, and feels the leaping vein.
Convinced, o'erjoyed, his studied thanks and praise,
To her who made the miracle, he pays;
Then lips to lips he joined; now freed from fear,
He found the savour of the kiss sincere.
At this the wakened image oped her eyes,
And viewed at once the light and lover with surprise.
The goddess, present at the match she made,
So blessed the bed, such fruitfulness conveyed,
That ere ten moons had sharpened either horn,
To crown their bliss, a lovely boy was born;
Paphos his name, who, grown to manhood, walled
The city Paphos, from the founder called.

CINYRAS AND MYRRHA.

OUT OF THE TENTH BOOK OF

OVID'S METAMORPHOSES.

There needs no connection of this story with the former; for the beginning of this immediately follows the end of the last: The reader is only to take notice, that Orpheus, who relates both, was by birth a Thracian; and his country far distant from Cyprus, where Myrrha was born, and from Arabia, whither she fled. You will see the reason of this note, soon after the first lines of this fable.

Nor him alone produced the fruitful queen;
But Cinyras, who like his sire had been
A happy prince, had he not been a sire.
Daughters and fathers, from my song retire!
I sing of horror; and, could I prevail,
You should not hear, or not believe my tale.
Yet if the pleasure of my song be such,
That you will hear, and credit me too much,
Attentive listen to the last event,
And with the sin believe the punishment:

Since nature could behold so dire a crime,
I gratulate at least my native clime,
That such a land, which such a monster bore,
So far is distant from our Thracian shore.
Let Araby extol her happy coast,
Her cinnamon and sweet amomum boast;
Her fragrant flowers, her trees with precious tears,
Her second harvests, and her double years;
How can the land be called so blessed, that Myrrha bears?
Not all her odorous tears can cleanse her crime,
Her plant alone deforms the happy clime;
Cupid denies to have inflamed thy heart,
Disowns thy love, and vindicates his dart;
Some fury gave thee those infernal pains,
And shot her venomed vipers in thy veins.
To hate thy sire, had merited a curse;
But such an impious love deserved a worse.
The neighbouring monarchs, by thy beauty led,
Contend in crowds, ambitious of thy bed;
The world is at thy choice, except but one,
Except but him thou canst not choose alone.
She knew it too, the miserable maid,
Ere impious love her better thoughts betrayed,
And thus within her secret soul she said:—
Ah, Myrrha! whither would thy wishes tend?
Ye Gods, ye sacred laws, my soul defend
From such a crime as all mankind detest,
And never lodged before in human breast!
But is it sin? Or makes my mind alone
The imagined sin? For nature makes it none.
What tyrant then these envious laws began,
Made not for any other beast but man!
The father-bull his daughter may bestride,
The horse may make his mother-mare a bride;
What piety forbids the lusty ram,
Or more salacious goat, to rut their dam?

The hen is free to wed her chick she bore,
And make a husband, whom she hatched before.
All creatures else are of a happier kind,
Whom nor ill-natured laws from pleasure bind,
Nor thoughts of sin disturb their peace of mind.
But man a slave of his own making lives;
The fool denies himself what nature gives;
Too busy senates, with an over care
To make us better than our kind can bear,
Have dashed a spice of envy in the laws,
And, straining up too high, have spoiled the cause.
Yet some wise nations break their cruel chains,
And own no laws, but those which love ordains;
Where happy daughters with their sires are joined,
And piety is doubly paid in kind.
O that I had been born in such a clime,
Not here, where 'tis the country makes the crime!...
But whither would my impious fancy stray?
Hence hopes, and ye forbidden thoughts, away!
His worth deserves to kindle my desires,
But with the love that daughters bear to sires.
Then had not Cinyras my father been,
What hindered Myrrha's hopes to be his queen?
But the perverseness of my fate is such,
That he's not mine, because he's mine too much:
Our kindred-blood debars a better tie;
He might be nearer, were he not so nigh.
Eyes and their objects never must unite,
Some distance is required to help the sight.
Fain would I travel to some foreign shore,
Never to see my native country more,
So might I to myself myself restore;
So might my mind these impious thoughts remove,
And, ceasing to behold, might cease to love.
But stay I must, to feed my famished sight,
To talk, to kiss; and more, if more I might:...

More, impious maid! What more canst thou design?
To make a monstrous mixture in thy line,
And break all statutes human and divine?
Canst thou be called (to save thy wretched life)
Thy mother's rival, and thy father's wife?
Confound so many sacred names in one,
Thy brother's mother! sister to thy son!
And fear'st thou not to see the infernal bands,
Their heads with snakes, with torches armed their hands,
Full at thy face the avenging brands to bear,
And shake the serpents from their hissing hair?
But thou in time the increasing ill controul,
Nor first debauch the body by the soul;
Secure the sacred quiet of thy mind,
And keep the sanctions nature has designed.
Suppose I should attempt, the attempt were vain;
No thoughts like mine his sinless soul profane,
Observant of the right; and O, that he
Could cure my madness, or be mad like me!—
Thus she; but Cinyras, who daily sees
A crowd of noble suitors at his knees,
Among so many, knew not whom to choose,
Irresolute to grant, or to refuse;
But, having told their names, inquired of her,
Who pleased her best, and whom she would prefer?
The blushing maid stood silent with surprise,
And on her father fixed her ardent eyes,
And, looking, sighed; and, as she sighed, began
Round tears to shed, that scalded as they ran.
The tender sire, who saw her blush, and cry,
Ascribed it all to maiden-modesty;
And dried the falling drops, and, yet more kind,
He stroked her cheeks, and holy kisses joined:
She felt a secret venom fire her blood,
And found more pleasure than a daughter should;

And, asked again, what lover of the crew
She liked the best? she answered, one like you.
Mistaking what she meant, her pious will
He praised, and bade her so continue still:
The word of "pious" heard, she blushed with shame
Of secret guilt, and could not bear the name.
'Twas now the mid of night, when slumbers close
Our eyes, and sooth our cares with soft repose;
But no repose could wretched Myrrha find,
Her body rolling, as she rolled her mind:
Mad with desire, she ruminates her sin,
And wishes all her wishes o'er again:
Now she despairs, and now resolves to try;
Would not, and would again, she knows not why;
Stops and returns, makes and retracts the vow;
Fain would begin, but understands not how:
As when a pine is hewn upon the plains,
And the last mortal stroke alone remains,
Labouring in pangs of death, and threatening all,
This way and that she nods, considering where to fall;
So Myrrha's mind, impelled on either side,
Takes every bent, but cannot long abide:
Irresolute on which she should rely,
At last, unfixed in all, is only fixed to die.
On that sad thought she rests; resolved on death,
She rises, and prepares to choke her breath:
Then while about the beam her zone she ties,
Dear Cinyras, farewell, she softly cries;
For thee I die, and only wish to be
Not hated, when thou know'st I die for thee:
Pardon the crime, in pity to the cause.—
This said, about her neck the noose she draws.
The nurse, who lay without, her faithful guard,
Though not the words, the murmurs overheard,
And sighs and hollow sounds; surprised with fright,
She starts, and leaves her bed, and springs a light;

Unlocks the door, and, entering out of breath,
The dying saw, and instruments of death.
She shrieks, she cuts the zone with trembling haste,
And in her arms her fainting charge embraced;
Next (for she now had leisure for her tears)
She weeping asked, in these her blooming years,
What unforeseen misfortune caused her care,
To loathe her life, and languish in despair:
The maid, with downcast eyes, and mute with grief,
For death unfinished, and ill-timed relief,
Stood sullen to her suit: the beldame pressed
The more to know, and bared her withered breast;
Adjured her, by the kindly food she drew
From those dry founts, her secret ill to shew.
Sad Myrrha sighed, and turned her eyes aside;
The nurse still urged, and would not be denied;
Nor only promised secrecy, but prayed
She might have leave to give her offered aid.
Good will, she said, my want of strength supplies,
And diligence shal give what age denies.
If strong desires thy mind to fury move,
With charms and medicines I can cure thy love;
If envious eyes their hurtful rays have cast,
More powerful verse shall free thee from the blast;
If heaven, offended, sends thee this disease,
Offended heaven with prayers we can appease.
What then remains, that can these cares procure?
Thy house is flourishing, thy fortune sure;
Thy careful mother yet in health survives,
And, to thy comfort, thy kind father lives.—
The virgin started at her father's name,
And sighed profoundly, conscious of the shame;
Nor yet the nurse her impious love divined,
But yet surmised, that love disturbed her mind.
Thus thinking, she pursued her point, and laid
And lull'd within her lap the mourning maid;

Then softly soothed her thus,—I guess your grief;
You love, my child; your love shall find relief.
My long experienced age shall be your guide;
Rely on that, and lay distrust aside;
No breath of air shall on the secret blow,
Nor shall (what most you fear) your father know.
Struck once again, as with a thunder-clap,
The guilty virgin bounded from her lap,
And threw her body prostrate on the bed,
And, to conceal her blushes, hid her head:
There silent lay, and warned her with her hand
To go; but she received not the command;
Remaining still importunate to know.
Then Myrrha thus; Or ask no more, or go;
I prythee go, or, staying, spare my shame;
What thou wouldst hear, is impious even to name.—
At this, on high the beldame holds her hands,
And trembling, both with age and terrour, stands;
Adjures, and, falling at her feet, intreats,
Sooths her with blandishments, and frights with threats,
To tell the crime intended, or disclose
What part of it she knew, if she no farther knows;
And last, if conscious to her counsel made,
Confirms anew the promise of her aid.
Now Myrrha raised her head; but soon, oppressed
With shame, reclined it on her nurse's breast;
Bathed it with tears, and strove to have confessed:
Twice she began, and stopped; again she tried;
The faultering tongue its office still denied;
At last her veil before her face she spread,
And drew a long preluding sigh, and said,
O happy mother, in thy marriage bed!...
Then groaned, and ceased.—The good old woman shook,
Stiff were her eyes, and ghastly was her look;

Her hoary hair upright with horror stood,
Made (to her grief) more knowing than she would;
Much she reproached, and many things she said,
To cure the madness of the unhappy maid:
In vain; for Myrrha stood convict of ill;
Her reason vanquished, but unchanged her will;
Perverse of mind, unable to reply,
She stood resolved or to possess, or die.
At length the fondness of a nurse prevailed
Against her better sense, and virtue failed:
Enjoy, my child, since such is thy desire,
Thy love, she said; she durst not say, thy sire.
Live, though unhappy, live on any terms;
Then with a second oath her faith confirms.
The solemn feast of Ceres now was near,
When long white linen stoles the matrons wear;
Ranked in procession walk the pious train,
Offering first-fruits, and spikes of yellow grain;
For nine long nights the nuptial bed they shun,
And, sanctifying harvest, lie alone.
Mixed with the crowd, the queen forsook her lord,
And Ceres' power with secret rites adored.
The royal couch now vacant for a time,
The crafty crone, officious in her crime,
The curst occasion took; the king she found
Easy with wine, and deep in pleasure drowned,
Prepared for love; the beldame blew the flame,
Confessed the passion, but concealed the name.
Her form she praised: the monarch asked her years,
And she replied, the same that Myrrha bears.
Wine and commended beauty fired his thought;
Impatient, he commands her to be brought.
Pleased with her charge performed, she hies her home,
And gratulates the nymph, the task was overcome.
Myrrha was joyed the welcome news to hear;
But, clogged with guilt, the joy was insincere

So various, so discordant is the mind,
That in our will, a different will we find.
Ill she presaged, and yet pursued her lust;
For guilty pleasures give a double gust.
'Twas depth of night; Arctophylax had driven
His lazy wain half round the northern heaven,
When Myrrha hastened to the crime desired.
The moon beheld her first, and first retired;
The stars, amazed, ran backward from the sight,
And, shrunk within their sockets, lost their light.
Icarius first withdraws his holy flame;
The Virgin sign, in heaven the second name,
Slides down the belt, and from her station flies,
And night with sable clouds involves the skies.
Bold Myrrha still pursues her black intent;
She stumbled thrice, (an omen of the event;)
Thrice shrieked the funeral owl, yet on she went,
Secure of shame, because secure of sight;
Even bashful sins are impudent by night.
Linked hand in hand, the accomplice and the dame,
Their way exploring, to the chamber came;
The door was ope, they blindly grope their way,
Where dark in bed the expecting monarch lay:
Thus far her courage held, but here forsakes;
Her faint knees knock at every step she makes.
The nearer to her crime, the more within
She feels remorse, and horror of her sin;
Repents too late her criminal desire,
And wishes, that unknown she could retire.
Her, lingering thus, the nurse, who feared delay,
The fatal secret might at length betray,
Pulled forward, to complete the work begun,
And said to Cinyras,—Receive thy own!...
Thus saying, she delivered kind to kind,
Accursed, and their devoted bodies joined.
The sire, unknowing of the crime, admits
His bowels, and profanes the hallowed sheets.

He found she trembled, but believed she strove,
With maiden modesty, against her love;
And sought, with flattering words, vain fancies to remove.
Perhaps he said, My daughter, cease thy fears,—
Because the title suited with her years;
And, Father,—she might whisper him again,
That names might not be wanting to the sin.
Full of her sire, she left the incestuous bed,
And carried in her womb the crime she bred.
Another, and another night she came;
For frequent sin had left no sense of shame;
Till Cinyras desired to see her face,
Whose body he had held in close embrace,
And brought a taper; the revealer, light,
Exposed both crime, and criminal, to sight.
Grief, rage, amazement, could no speech afford,
But from the sheath he drew the avenging sword;
The guilty fled; the benefit of night,
That favoured first the sin, secured the flight.
Long wandering through the spacious fields, she bent
Her voyage to the Arabian continent;
Then passed the region which Panchæa joined,
And flying left the palmy plains behind.
Nine times the moon had mewed her horns; at length
With travel weary, unsupplied with strength,
And with the burden of her womb oppressed,
Sabæan fields afford her needful rest;
There, loathing life, and yet of death afraid,
In anguish of her spirit, thus she prayed:—
Ye powers, if any so propitious are
To accept my penitence, and hear my prayer,
Your judgments, I confess, are justly sent;
Great sins deserve as great a punishment:
Yet, since my life the living will profane,
And since my death the happy dead will stain,

A middle state your mercy may bestow,
Betwixt the realms above, and those below;
Some other form to wretched Myrrha give,
Nor let her wholly die, nor wholly live.—
The prayers of penitents are never vain;
At least, she did her last request obtain;
For, while she spoke, the ground began to rise,
And gathered round her feet, her legs, and thighs;
Her toes in roots descend, and, spreading wide,
A firm foundation for the trunk provide;
Her solid bones convert to solid wood,
To pith her marrow, and to sap her blood;
Her arms are boughs, her fingers change their kind,
Her tender skin is hardened into rind.
And now the rising tree her womb invests,
Now, shooting upwards still, invades her breasts,
And shades the neck; and, weary with delay,
She sunk her head within, and met it half the way.
And though with outward shape she lost her sense,
With bitter tears she wept her last offence;
And still she weeps, nor sheds her tears in vain;
For still the precious drops her name retain.
Mean time the misbegotten infant grows,
And, ripe for birth, distends with deadly throes
The swelling rind, with unavailing strife,
To leave the wooden womb, and pushes into life.
The mother-tree, as if oppressed with pain,
Writhes here and there, to break the bark, in vain;
And, like a labouring woman, would have prayed,
But wants a voice to call Lucina's aid;
The bending bole sends out a hollow sound,
And trickling tears fall thicker on the ground.
The mild Lucina came uncalled, and stood
Beside the struggling boughs, and heard the groaning wood;

Then reached her midwife-hand, to speed the throes,
And spoke the powerful spells that babes to birth disclose.
The bark divides, the living load to free,
And safe delivers the convulsive tree.
The ready nymphs receive the crying child,
And wash him in the tears the parent plant distilled.
They swathed him with their scarfs ; beneath him spread
The ground with herbs ; with roses raised his head.
The lovely babe was born with every grace ;
Even envy must have praised so fair a face :
Such was his form, as painters, when they show
Their utmost art, on naked loves bestow ;
And that their arms no difference might betray,
Give him a bow, or his from Cupid take away.
Time glides along, with undiscovered haste,
The future but a length behind the past,
So swift are years ; the babe, whom just before
His grandsire got, and whom his sister bore ;
The drop, the thing which late the tree inclosed,
And late the yawning bark to life exposed ;
A babe, a boy, a beauteous youth appears ; *
And lovelier than himself at riper years.
Now to the queen of love he gave desires,
And, with her pains, revenged his mother's fires.

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* Adonis.

CEYX AND ALCYONE.

OUT OF THE TENTH BOOK OF

OVID'S METAMORPHOSES.

CONNECTION OF THIS FABLE WITH THE FORMER.

Ceyx, the son of Lucifer, (the morning star,) and king of Trachin, in Thessaly, was married to Alcyone, daughter to Æolus, god of the winds. Both the husband and the wife loved each other with an entire affection. Dædalion, the elder brother of Ceyx, whom he succeeded, having been turned into a falcon by Apollo, and Chione, Dædalion's daughter, slain by Diana, Ceyx prepares a ship to sail to Claros, there to consult the oracle of Apollo, and (as Ovid seems to intimate) to enquire how the anger of the Gods might be atoned.

These prodigies affect the pious prince;
But, more perplexed with those that happened since,
He purposes to seek the Clarian God,
Avoiding Delphos, his more famed abode;
Since Phlegian robbers made unsafe the road.
Yet could not he from her he loved so well,
The fatal voyage, he resolved, conceal;
But when she saw her lord prepared to part,
A deadly cold ran shivering to her heart;

Her faded cheeks are changed to boxen hue,
And in her eyes the tears are ever new;
She thrice essayed to speak: her accents hung,
And, faultering, died unfinished on her tongue,
Or vanished into sighs; with long delay
Her voice returned; and found the wonted way.
Tell me, my lord, she said, what fault unknown
Thy once beloved Alcyone has done?
Whither, ah whither is thy kindness gone!
Can Ceyx then sustain to leave his wife,
And unconcerned forsake the sweets of life?
What can thy mind to this long journey move,
Or need'st thou absence to renew thy love?
Yet, if thou goest by land, though grief possess
My soul even then, my fears will be the less.
But ah! be warned to shun the watery way,
The face is frightful of the stormy sea.
For late I saw a-drift disjointed planks,
And empty tombs erected on the banks.
Nor let false hopes to trust betray thy mind,
Because my sire in caves constrains the wind,
Can with a breath a clamorous rage appease,
They fear his whistle, and forsake the seas:
Not so; for, once indulged, they sweep the main,
Deaf to the call, or, hearing, hear in vain;
But bent on mischief, bear the waves before,
And, not content with seas, insult the shore;
When ocean, air, and earth, at once engage,
And rooted forests fly before their rage;
At once the clashing clouds to battle move,
And lightnings run across the fields above:
I know them well, and marked their rude comport,
While yet a child, within my father's court;
In times of tempest they command alone,
And he but sits precarious on the throne;
The more I know, the more my fears augment,
And fears are oft prophetic of the event.

But if not fears, or reasons will prevail,
If fate has fixed thee obstinate to sail,
Go not without thy wife, but let me bear
My part of danger with an equal share,
And present suffer what I only fear;
Then o'er the bounding billows shall we fly,
Secure to live together, or to die.—
These reasons moved her starlike husband's heart,
But still he held his purpose to depart;
For as he loved her equal to his life,
He would not to the seas expose his wife;
Nor could be wrought his voyage to refrain,
But sought by arguments to sooth her pain:
Nor these availed; at length he lights on one,
With which so difficult a cause he won:—
My love, so short an absence cease to fear,
For, by my father's holy flame I swear,
Before two moons their orb with light adorn,
If heaven allow me life, I will return.—
This promise of so short a stay prevails;
He soon equips the ship, supplies the sails,
And gives the word to launch; she trembling views
This pomp of death, and parting tears renews;
Last, with a kiss, she took a long farewell,
Sighed, with a sad presage, and swooning fell.
While Ceyx seeks delays, the lusty crew,
Raised on their banks, their oars in order drew
To their broad breasts,—the ship with fury flew.
The queen, recovered, rears her humid eyes,
And first her husband on the poop espies,
Shaking his hand at distance on the main;
She took the sign, and shook her hand again.
Still as the ground recedes, retracts her view
With sharpened sight, till she no longer knew
The much-loved face; that comfort lost, supplies
With less, and with the galley feeds her eyes;

The galley borne from view by rising gales,
She followed with her sight the flying sails;
When even the flying sails were seen no more,
Forsaken of all sight, she left the shore.
Then on her bridal bed her body throws,
And sought in sleep her wearied eyes to close;
Her husband's pillow, and the widowed part
Which once he pressed, renewed the former smart.
And now a breeze from shore began to blow;
The sailors ship their oars, and cease to row;
Then hoist their yards atrip, and all their sails
Let fall, to court the wind, and catch the gales.
By this the vessel half her course had run,
And as much rested till the rising sun;
Both shores were lost to sight, when at the close
Of day, a stiffer gale at east arose;
The sea grew white, the rolling waves from far,
Like heralds, first denounce the watery war.
This seen, the master soon began to cry,
Strike, strike the top-sail; let the main sheet fly,
And furl your sails.—The winds repel the sound,
And in the speaker's mouth the speech is drowned.
Yet of their own accord, as danger taught,
Each in his way, officiously they wrought;
Some stow their oars, or stop the leaky sides;
Another, bolder yet, the yard bestrides,
And folds the sails; a fourth, with labour, laves
The intruding seas, and waves ejects on waves.
In this confusion while their work they ply,
The winds augment the winter of the sky,
And wage intestine wars; the suffering seas
Are tossed, and mingled as their tyrants please.
The master would command, but, in despair
Of safety, stands amazed with stupid care,
Nor what to bid, or what forbid, he knows,
The ungoverned tempest to such fury grows;

Vain is his force, and vainer is his skill,
With such a concourse comes the flood of ill;
The cries of men are mixed with rattling shrouds;
Seas dash on seas, and clouds encounter clouds;
At once from east to west, from pole to pole,
The forky lightnings flash, the roaring thunders roll.
Now waves on waves ascending scale the skies,
And, in the fires above, the water fries;
When yellow sands are sifted from below,
The glittering billows give a golden show;
And when the fouler bottom spews the black,
The Stygian dye the tainted waters take;
Then frothy white appear the flatted seas,
And change their colour, changing their disease.
Like various fits the Trachin vessel finds,
And now sublime she rides upon the winds;
As from a lofty summit looks from high,
And from the clouds beholds the nether sky;
Now from the depth of hell they lift their sight,
And at a distance see superior light;
The lashing billows make a loud report,
And beat her sides, as battering rams a fort;
Or as a lion, bounding in his way,
With force augmented bears against his prey,
Sidelong to seize; or, unappalled with fear,
Springs on the toils, and rushes on the spear;
So seas impelled by winds, with added power,
Assault the sides, and o'er the hatches tower.
The planks, their pitchy coverings washed away,
Now yield; and now a yawning breach display;
The roaring waters with a hostile tide
Rush through the ruins of her gaping side.
Meantime, in sheets of rain the sky descends,
And ocean, swelled with waters, upwards tends,
One rising, falling one; the heavens and sea
Meet at their confines, in the middle way;

The sails are drunk with showers, and drop with rain,
Sweet waters mingle with the briny main.
No star appears to lend his friendly light;
Darkness and tempest make a double night;
But flashing fires disclose the deep by turns,
And, while the lightnings blaze, the water burns.
Now all the waves their scattered force unite;
And, as a soldier, foremost in the fight,
Makes way for others, and, an host alone,
Still presses on, and, urging, gains the town;
So while the invading billows come a-breast,
The hero tenth, advanced before the rest,
Sweeps all before him with impetuous sway,
And from the walls descends upon the prey;
Part following enter, part remain without,
With envy hear their fellows' conquering shout,
And mount on others' backs, in hope to share
The city, thus become the seat of war.
An universal cry resounds aloud,
The sailors run in heaps, a helpless crowd;
Art fails, and courage falls, no succour near;
As many waves, as many deaths appear.
One weeps, and yet despairs of late relief;
One cannot weep, his fears congeal his grief;
But, stupid, with dry eyes expects his fate.
One with loud shrieks laments his lost estate,
And calls those happy whom their funerals wait.
This wretch with prayers and vows the gods implores,
And even the skies he cannot see, adores.
That other on his friends his thoughts bestows,
His careful father, and his faithful spouse.
The covetous worldling in his anxious mind
Thinks only on the wealth he left behind.
All Ceyx his Alcyone employs,
For her he grieves, yet in her absence joys;
His wife he wishes, and would still be near,
Not her with him, but wishes him with her:

Now with last looks he seeks his native shore,
Which fate has destined him to see no more;
He sought, but in the dark tempestuous night
He knew not whither to direct his sight.
So whirl the seas, such darkness blinds the sky,
That the black night receives a deeper dye.
The giddy ship ran round; the tempest tore
Her mast, and over-board the rudder bore.
One billow mounts; and with a scornful brow,
Proud of her conquest gained, insults the waves below;
Nor lighter falls, than if some giant tore
Pindus and Athos, with the freight they bore,
And tossed on seas; pressed with the ponderous blow,
Down sinks the ship within the abyss below;
Down with the vessel sink into the main
The many, never more to rise again.
Some few on scattered planks with fruitless care
Lay hold, and swim; but, while they swim, despair.
Even he, who late a sceptre did command,
Now grasps a floating fragment in his hand;
And while he struggles on the stormy main,
Invokes his father, and his wife, in vain:
But yet his consort is his greater care;
Alcyone he names amidst his prayer;
Names as a charm against the waves and wind,
Most in his mouth, and ever in his mind.
Tired with his toil, all hopes of safety past,
From prayers to wishes he descends at last,—
That his dead body, wafted to the sands,
Might have its burial from her friendly hands.
As oft as he can catch a gulph of air,
And peep above the seas, he names the fair;
And, even when plunged beneath, on her he raves,
Murmuring Alcyone below the waves:

At last a falling billow stops his breath,
Breaks o'er his head, and whelms him underneath.
Bright Lucifer * unlike himself appears
That night, his heavenly form obscured with tears;
And since he was forbid to leave the skies,
He muffled with a cloud his mournful eyes.
Mean time Alcyone (his fate unknown)
Computes how many nights he had been gone;
Observes the waning moon with hourly view,
Numbers her age, and wishes for a new;
Against the promised time provides with care,
And hastens in the woof the robes he was to wear;
And for herself employs another loom,
New-dressed to meet her lord returning home,
Flattering her heart with joys that never were to come.
She fumed the temples with an odorous flame,
And oft before the sacred altars came,
To pray for him, who was an empty name;
All powers implored, but far above the rest,
To Juno she her pious vows addressed,
Her much-loved lord from perils to protect,
And safe o'er seas his voyage to direct;
Then prayed that she might still possess his heart,
And no pretending rival share a part.
This last petition heard, of all her prayer;
The rest, dispersed by winds, were lost in air.
But she, the goddess of the nuptial bed,
Tired with her vain devotions for the dead,
Resolved the tainted hand should be repelled,
Which incense offered, and her altar held:
Then Iris thus bespoke,—Thou faithful maid,
By whom the queen's commands are well conveyed,

* Ceyx was the son of the Morning Star.

Haste to the house of Sleep, and bid the god,
Who rules the night by visions with a nod,
Prepare a dream, in figure and in form
Resembling him who perished in the storm:
This form before Alcyone present,
To make her certain of the sad event —
Endued with robes of various hue she flies,
And flying draws an arch, a segment of the skies;
Then leaves her bending bow, and from the steep
Descends to search the silent house of Sleep.
Near the Cimmerians, in his dark abode,
Deep in a cavern, dwells the drowsy god;
Whose gloomy mansion nor the rising sun,
Nor setting, visits, nor the lightsome noon;
But lazy vapours round the region fly,
Perpetual twilight, and a doubtful sky;
No crowing cock does there his wings display,
Nor with his horny bill provoke the day;
Nor watchful dogs, nor the more wakeful geese,
Disturb with nightly noise the sacred peace;
Nor beast of nature, nor the tame, are nigh,
Nor trees with tempests rocked. nor human cry;
But safe repose, without an air of breath,
Dwells here, and a dumb quiet next to death.
An arm of Lethe, with a gentle flow,
Arising upwards from the rock below,
The palace moats, and o'er the pebbles creeps,
And with soft murmurs calls the coming sleeps;
Around its entry nodding poppies grow,
And all cool simples that sweet rest bestow;
Night from the plants their sleepy virtue drains,
And passing sheds it on the silent plains:
No door there was the unguarded house to keep,
On creaking hinges turned, to break his sleep.
But in the gloomy court was raised a bed,
Stuffed with black plumes, and on an ebon sted;

Black was the covering too, where lay the god,
And slept supine, his limbs displayed abroad;
About his head fantastic visions fly,
Which various images of things supply,
And mock their forms; the leaves on trees not more,
Nor bearded ears in fields, nor sands upon the shore.
The virgin, entering bright, indulged the day
To the brown cave, and brushed the dreams away;
The god, disturbed with this new glare of light
Cast sudden on his face, unsealed his sight,
And raised his tardy head, which sunk again,
And, sinking on his bosom, knocked his chin;
At length shook off himself, and asked the dame
(And asking yawned,) for what intent she came?
To whom the goddess thus:—O sacred Rest,
Sweet pleasing Sleep, of all the powers the best!
O peace of mind, repairer of decay,
Whose balms renew the limbs to labours of the day,
Care shuns thy soft approach, and sullen flies away!
Adorn a dream, expressing human form,
The shape of him who suffered in the storm,
And send it flitting to the Trachin court,
The wreck of wretched Ceyx to report:
Before his queen bid the pale spectre stand,
Who begs a vain relief at Juno's hand.—
She said, and scarce awake her eyes could keep,
Unable to support the fumes of sleep;
But fled, returning by the way she went,
And swerved along her bow with swift ascent.
The god, uneasy till he slept again,
Resolved at once to rid himself of pain;
And, though against his custom, called aloud,
Exciting Morpheus from the sleepy crowd;
Morpheus, of all his numerous train, expressed
The shape of man, and imitated best;
The walk, the words, the gesture could supply,
The habit mimic, and the mien bely;

Plays well, but all his action is confined;
Extending not beyond our human kind.
Another birds, and beasts, and dragons, apes,
And dreadful images, and monster shapes:
This dæmon, Icelos, in heaven's high hall
The gods have named; but men Phobeter call:
A third is Phantasus, whose actions roll
On meaner thoughts, and things devoid of soul;
Earth, fruits, and flowers, he represents in dreams,
And solid rocks unmoved, and running streams.
These three to kings and chiefs their scenes display,
The rest before the ignoble commons play:
Of these the chosen Morpheus is dispatched;
Which done, the lazy monarch overwatched,
Down from his propping elbow drops his head,
Dissolved in sleep, and shrinks within his bed.
Darkling the dæmon glides, for flight prepared,
So soft that scarce his fanning wings are heard.
To Trachin, swift as thought, the flitting shade
Through air his momentary journey made:
Then lays aside the steerage of his wings,
Forsakes his proper form, assumes the king's;
And pale as death, despoiled of his array,
Into the queen's apartment takes his way,
And stands before the bed at dawn of day:
Unmoved his eyes, and wet his beard appears,
And shedding vain, but seeming real tears;
The briny water dropping from his hairs;
Then staring on her, with a ghastly look
And hollow voice, he thus the Queen bespoke.
Knowest thou not me? Not yet, unhappy wife?
Or are my features perished with my life?
Look once again, and for thy husband lost,
Lo! all that's left of him, thy husband's ghost!
Thy vows for my return were all in vain;
Thy stormy south o'ertook us in the main;
And never shalt thou see thy loving lord again.

Bear witness, heaven, I called on thee in death,
And, while I called, a billow stopped my breath.
Think not that flying fame reports my fate;
I, present I, appear, and my own wreck relate.
Rise, wretched widow, rise, nor undeplored
Permit my ghost to pass the Stygian ford;
But rise, prepared in black to mourn thy perished lord.

Thus said the player god; and, adding art
Of voice and gesture, so performed his part,
She thought (so like her love the shade appears)
That Ceyx spake the words, and Ceyx shed the tears.
She groaned, her inward soul with grief oppresst,
She sighed, she wept, and sleeping beat her breast:
Then stretched her arms to embrace his body bare,
Her clasping arms inclose but empty air:
At this, not yet awake, she cried,—Oh stay,
One is our fate, and common is our way!—
So dreadful was the dream, so loud she spoke,
That, starting sudden up, the slumber broke;
Then cast her eyes around, in hope to view
Her vanished lord, and find the vision true;
For now the maids, who waited her commands,
Ran in with lighted tapers in their hands
Tired with the search, not finding what she seeks,
With cruel blows she pounds her blubbered cheeks;
Then from her beaten breast the linen tare,
And cut the golden caul that bound her hair.
Her nurse demands the cause; with louder cries
She prosecutes her griefs, and thus replies.

No more Alcyone, she suffered death
With her loved lord, when Ceyx lost his breath:
No flattery, no false comfort, give me none,
My shipwrecked Ceyx is for ever gone;
I saw, I saw him manifest in view,
His voice, his figure, and his gestures knew:

His lustre lost, and every living grace,
Yet I retained the features of his face:
Though with pale cheeks, wet beard, and dropping hair,
None but my Ceyx could appear so fair;
I would have strained him with a strict embrace,
But through my arms he slipt, and vanished from
the place;
There, even just there he stood;—and as she spoke,
Where last the spectre was, she cast her look;
Fain would she hope, and gazed upon the ground,
If any printed footsteps might be found;
Then sighed, and said;—This I too well foreknew,
And my prophetic fear presaged too true;
'Twas what I begged, when with a bleeding heart
I took my leave, and suffered thee to part,
Or I to go along, or thou to stay,
Never, ah never to divide our way!
Happier for me, that, all our hours assigned,
Together we had lived, even not in death disjoined!
So had my Ceyx still been living here,
Or with my Ceyx I had perished there;
Now I die absent, in the vast profound,
And me without myself the seas have drowned:
The storms were not so cruel; should I strive
To lengthen life, and such a grief survive!
But neither will I strive, nor wretched thee
In death forsake, but keep thee company.
If not one common sepulchre contains
Our bodies, or one urn our last remains,
Yet Ceyx and Alcyone shall join,
Their names remembered in one common line.—
No farther voice her mighty grief affords,
For sighs come rushing in betwixt her words,
And stopt her tongue; but what her tongue denied,
Soft tears, and groans, and dumb complaints supplied.
'Twas morning; to the port she takes her way,
And stands upon the margin of the sea;

That place, that very spot of ground she sought,
Or thither by her destiny was brought,
Where last he stood; and while she sadly said,
'Twas here he left me, lingering here, delayed
His parting kiss, and there his anchors weighed.
Thus speaking, while her thoughts past actions trace,
And call to mind, admonished by the place,
Sharp at her utmost ken she cast her eyes,
And somewhat floating from afar descries;
It seemed a corpse adrift, to distant sight,
But at a distance who could judge aright?
It wafted nearer yet, and then she knew,
That what before she but surmised was true;
A corpse it was, but whose it was, unknown,
Yet moved, howe'er, she made the case her own;
Took the bad omen of a shipwrecked man,
As for a stranger wept, and thus began:
Poor wretch, on stormy seas to lose thy life,
Unhappy thou, but more thy widowed wife!—
At this she paused; for now the flowing tide
Had brought the body nearer to the side:
The more she looks, the more her fears increase
At nearer sight, and she's herself the less:
Now driven ashore, and at her feet it lies;
She knows too much, in knowing whom she sees,—
Her husband's corpse; at this she loudly shrieks,
'Tis he, 'tis he, she cries, and tears her cheeks,
Her hair, her vest; and, stooping to the sands,
About his neck she casts her trembling hands.
And is it thus, O dearer than my life,
Thus, thus return'st thou to thy longing wife!—
She said, and to the neighbouring mole she strode,
Raised there to break the incursions of the flood;
Headlong from hence to plunge herself she springs,
But shoots along supported on her wings;
A bird new-made about the banks she plies,
Not far from shore, and short excursions tries;

Nor seeks in air her humble flight to raise,
Content to skim the surface of the seas;
Her bill, though slender, sends a creaking noise,
And imitates a lamentable voice;
Now lighting where the bloodless body lies,
She with a funeral note renews her cries.
At all her stretch her little wings she spread,
And with her feathered arms embraced the dead;
Then flickering to his pallid lips, she strove
To print a kiss, the last essay of love;
Whether the vital touch revived the dead,
Or that the moving waters raised his head
To meet the kiss, the vulgar doubt alone,
For sure a present miracle was shown.
The gods their shapes to winter-birds translate,
But both obnoxious to their former fate.
Their conjugal affection still is tied,
And still the mournful race is multiplied;
They bill, they tread; Alcyone compressed,
Seven days sits brooding on her floating nest,
A wintery queen: her sire at length is kind,
Calms every storm, and hushes every wind;
Prepares his empire for his daughter's ease,
And for his hatching nephews smooths the seas.

ÆSACUS

TRANSFORMED INTO A CORMORANT.

FROM THE ELEVENTH BOOK OF

OVID'S METAMORPHOSES.

THESE some old man sees wanton in the air,
And praises the unhappy constant pair;
Then to his friend the long-necked Cormorant shows,
The former tale reviving other woes:
That sable bird, he cries, which cuts the flood
With slender legs, was once of royal blood;
His ancestors from mighty Tros proceed,
The brave Laomedon and Ganymede,
Whose beauty tempted Jove to steal the boy,
And Priam, hapless prince! who fell with Troy;
Himself was Hector's brother, and, had fate
But given this hopeful youth a longer date,
Perhaps had rivalled warlike Hector's worth,
Though on the mother's side of meaner birth;
Fair Alyxothoé, a country maid,
Bare Æsacus by stealth in Ida's shade.
He fled the noisy town, and pompous court,
Loved the lone hills, and simple rural sport,
And seldom to the city would resort.

Yet he no rustic clownishness profest,
Nor was soft love a stranger to his breast;
The youth had long the nymph Hesperio wooed,
Oft through the thicket, or the mead, pursued.
Her haply on her father's bank he spied
While fearless she her silver tresses dried;
Away she fled; not stags with half such speed,
Before the prowling wolf, scud o'er the mead;
Not ducks, when they the safer flood forsake,
Pursued by hawks, so swift regain the lake,
As fast he followed in the hot career:
Desire the lover winged, the virgin fear.
A snake unseen now pierced her heedless foot,
Quick through the veins the venomed juices shoot;
She fell, and 'scaped by death his fierce pursuit.
Her lifeless body, frighted, he embraced,
And cried,—Not this I dreaded, but thy haste;
O had my love been less, or less thy fear!
The victory thus bought is far too dear.
Accursed snake! yet I more cursed than he!
He gave the wound; the cause was given by me.
Yet none shall say, that unrevenged you died.—
He spoke; then climbed a cliff's o'er-hanging side.
And, resolute, leaped on the foaming tide.
Tethys received him gently on the wave;
The death he sought denied, and feathers gave.
Debarred the surest remedy of grief,
And forced to live, he curst the unasked relief;
Then on his airy pinions upward flies,
And at a second fall successless tries,
The downy plume a quick descent denies.
Enraged, he often dives beneath the wave,
And there in vain expects to find a grave.
His ceaseless sorrow for the unhappy maid
Meager'd his look, and on his spirits preyed.
Still near the sounding deep he lives; his name
From frequent diving and emerging came.

THE

TWELFTH BOOK

OF

OVID'S METAMORPHOSES,

WHOLLY TRANSLATED.

CONNECTION TO THE END OF THE ELEVENTH BOOK.

Æsacus, the son of Priam, loving a country life, forsakes the court; living obscurely, he falls in love with a nymph, who, flying from him, was killed by a serpent; for grief of this, he would have drowned himself; but, by the pity of the gods, is turned into a Cormorant. Priam, not hearing of Æsacus, believes him to be dead, and raises a tomb to preserve his memory. By this transition, which is one of the finest in all Ovid, the poet naturally falls into the story of the Trojan war, which is summed up in the present book; but so very briefly in many places, that Ovid seems more short than Virgil, contrary to his usual style. Yet the House of Fame, which is here described, is one of the most beautiful pieces in the whole Metamorphoses. The fight of Achilles and Cygnus, and the fray betwixt the Lapithæ and Centaurs, yield to no other part of this poet; and particularly the loves and death of Cyllarus and Hylonome, the male and female Centaur, are wonderfully moving.

PRIAM, to whom the story was unknown,
As dead, deplored his metamorphosed son;
A Cenotaph his name and title kept,
And Hector round the tomb, with all his brothers, wept.

This pious office Paris did not share;
Absent alone, and author of the war,
Which, for the Spartan queen, the Grecians drew
To avenge the rape, and Asia to subdue.
A thousand ships were manned, to sail the sea;
Nor had their just resentments found delay,
Had not the winds and waves opposed their way.
At Aulis, with united powers, they meet,
But there, cross winds or calms detained the fleet.
Now, while they raise an altar on the shore,
And Jove with solemn sacrifice adore,
A boding sign the priests and people see:
A snake of size immense ascends a tree,
And in the leafy summit spied a nest,
Which, o'er her callow young, a sparrow pressed.
Eight were the birds unfledged; their mother flew,
And hovered round her care, but still in view;
Till the fierce reptile first devoured the brood,
Then seized the fluttering dam, and drank her blood.
This dire ostent the fearful people view;
Calchas alone, by Phœbus taught, foreknew
What heaven decreed; and, with a smiling glance,
Thus gratulates to Greece her happy chance.
O Argives, we shall conquer; Troy is ours,
But long delays shall first afflict our powers;
Nine years of labour the nine birds portend,
The tenth shall in the town's destruction end.
The serpent, who his maw obscene had filled,
The branches in his curled embraces held;
But as in spires he stood, he turned to stone;
The stony snake retained the figure still his own.
Yet not for this the wind-bound navy weighed;
Slack were their sails, and Neptune disobeyed.
Some thought him loth the town should be destroyed,
Whose building had his hands divine employed;
Not so the seer, who knew, and known fore-showed,
The virgin Phœbe, with a virgin's blood,

Must first be reconciled; the common cause
Prevailed; and pity yielding to the laws,
Fair Iphigenia, the devoted maid,
Was, by the weeping priests, in linen robes arrayed.
All mourn her fate, but no relief appeared;
The royal victim bound, the knife already reared;
When that offended Power, who caused their woe,
Relenting ceased her wrath, and stopped the coming blow.
A mist before the ministers she cast,
And in the virgin's room a hind she placed.
The oblation slain, and Phœbe reconciled,
The storm was hushed, and dimpled ocean smiled;
A favourable gale arose from shore,
Which to the port desired the Grecian gallies bore.
Full in the midst of this created space,
Betwixt heaven, earth, and skies, there stands a place
Confining on all three, with triple bound;
Whence all things, though remote, are viewed around,
And thither bring their undulating sound;
The palace of loud Fame; her seat of power,
Placed on the summit of a lofty tower.
A thousand winding entries, long and wide,
Receive of fresh reports a flowing tide;
A thousand crannies in the walls are made;
Nor gate nor bars exclude the busy trade.
'Tis built of brass, the better to diffuse
The spreading sounds, and multiply the news;
Where echoes in repeated echoes play:
A mart for ever full, and open night and day.
Nor silence is within, nor voice express,
But a deaf noise of sounds that never cease;
Confused, and chiding, like the hollow roar
Of tides, receding from the insulted shore;
Or like the broken thunder, heard from far,
When Jove to distance drives the rolling war.

The courts are filled with a tumultuous din
Of crowds, or issuing forth, or entering in;
A thorough-fare of news; where some devise
Things never heard; some mingle truth with lies;
The troubled air with empty sounds they beat;
Intent to hear, and eager to repeat.
Error sits brooding there, with added train
Of vain credulity, and joys as vain;
Suspicion, with sedition joined, are near;
And rumours raised, and murmurs mixed, and panic fear.
Fame sits aloft, and sees the subject ground,
And seas about, and skies above, enquiring all around.
The goddess gives the alarm; and soon is known
The Grecian fleet, descending on the town.
Fixed on defence, the Trojans are not slow
To guard their shore from an expected foe.
They meet in fight; by Hector's fatal hand
Protesilaus falls, and bites the strand;
Which with expence of blood the Grecians won,
And proved the strength unknown of Priam's son;
And to their cost the Trojan leaders felt
The Grecian heroes, and what deaths they dealt.
From these first onsets, the Sigæan shore
Was strewed with carcases, and stained with gore.
Neptunian Cygnus troops of Greeks had slain;
Achilles in his car had scoured the plain,
And cleared the Trojan ranks; where'er he fought,
Cygnus, or Hector, through the fields he sought:
Cygnus he found; on him his force essayed;
For Hector was to the tenth year delayed.
His white-maned steeds, that bowed beneath the yoke,
He cheered to courage, with a gentle stroke;
Then urged his fiery chariot on the foe,
And rising shook his lance, in act to throw.
But first he cried,—O youth, be proud to bear
Thy death, ennobled by Pelides' spear.—

The lance pursued the voice without delay;
Nor did the whizzing weapon miss the way,
But pierced his cuirass, with such fury sent,
And signed his bosom with a purple dint.
At this the seed of Neptune;—Goddess-born,
For ornament, not use, these arms are worn;
This helm, and heavy buckler, I can spare,
As only decorations of the war;
So Mars is armed, for glory, not for need.
'Tis somewhat more from Neptune to proceed,
Than from a daughter of the sea to spring;
Thy sire is mortal; mine is Ocean's king.
Secure of death, I should contemn thy dart,
Though naked, and impassible depart.—
He said, and threw; the trembling weapon passed
Through nine bull-hides, each under other placed,
On his broad shield, and stuck within the last.
Achilles wrenched it out; and sent again
The hostile gift; the hostile gift was vain.
He tried a third, a tough well-chosen spear;
The inviolable body stood sincere,
Though Cygnus then did no defence provide,
But scornful offered his unshielded side.
Not otherwise the impatient hero fared,
Than as a bull, encompassed with a guard,
Amid the circus roars; provoked from far
By sight of scarlet, and a sanguine war.
They quit their ground, his bended horns elude,
In vain pursuing, and in vain pursued.
Before to farther fight he would advance,
He stood considering, and surveyed his lance.
Doubts if he wielded not a wooden spear
Without a point; he looked, the point was there.
This is my hand, and this my lance, he said,
By which so many thousand foes are dead.
O whither is their usual virtue fled!

I had it once; and the Lyrnessian wall,
And Tenedos, confessed it in their fall.
Thy streams, Caicus, rolled a crimson flood;
And Thebes ran red with her own natives' blood.
Twice Telephus employed their piercing steel,
To wound him first, and afterward to heal.
The vigour of this arm was never vain;
And that my wonted prowess I retain,
Witness these heaps of slaughter on the plain.—
He said, and, doubtful of his former deeds,
To some new trial of his force proceeds.
He chose Menætes from among the rest;
At him he lanced his spear, and pierced his breast;
On the hard earth the Lycian knocked his head,
And lay supine; and forth the spirit fled.

Then thus the hero: Neither can I blame
The hand, or javelin; both are still the same.
The same I will employ against this foe,
And wish but with the same success to throw —
So spoke the chief, and while he spoke he threw;
The weapon with unerring fury flew,
At his left shoulder aimed; nor entrance found;
But back, as from a rock, with swift rebound
Harmless returned; a bloody mark appeared,
Which with false joy the flattered hero cheered.
Wound there was none; the blood that was in view,
The lance before from slain Menætes drew.

Headlong he leaps from off his lofty car,
And in close fight on foot renews the war;
Raging with high disdain, repeats his blows;
Nor shield nor armour can their force oppose;
Huge cantlets of his buckler strew the ground,
And no defence in his bored arms is found.
But on his flesh no wound or blood is seen;
The sword itself is blunted on the skin.

This vain attempt the chief no longer bears;
But round his hollow temples and his ears,
His buckler beats: the son of Neptune, stunned
With these repeated buffets, quits his ground;
A sickly sweat succeeds, and shades of night;
Inverted nature swims before his sight:
The insulting victor presses on the more,
And treads the steps the vanquished trod before,
Nor rest, nor respite gives. A stone there lay
Behind his trembling foe, and stopped his way;
Achilles took the advantage which he found,
O'er-turned, and pushed him backward on the ground.
His buckler held him under, while he pressed,
With both his knees above, his panting breast;
Unlaced his helm; about his chin the twist
He tied, and soon the strangled soul dismissed.
With eager haste he went to strip the dead;
The vanquished body from his arms was fled.
His sea-god sire, t'immortalize his fame,
Had turned it to the bird that bears his name.*
A truce succeeds the labours of this day,
And arms suspended with a long delay.
While Trojan walls are kept with watch and ward,
The Greeks before their trenches mount the guard.
The feast approached; when to the blue-eyed Maid,
His vows for Cygnus slain the victor paid,
And a white heifer on her altar laid.
The reeking entrails on the fire they threw,
And to the gods the grateful odour flew;
Heaven had its part in sacrifice; the rest
Was broiled and roasted for the future feast.
The chief invited guests were set around;
And, hunger first assuaged, the bowls were crowned,
Which in deep draughts their cares and labours drowned.

* The swan.

The mellow harp did not their ears employ,
And mute was all the warlike symphony;
Discourse, the food of souls, was their delight,
And pleasing chat prolonged the summer's night.
The subject, deeds of arms; and valour shown,
Or on the Trojan side, or on their own.
Of dangers undertaken, fame atchieved,
They talked by turns, the talk by turns relieved.
What things but these could fierce Achilles tell,
Or what could fierce Achilles hear so well?
The last great act performed, of Cygnus slain,
Did most the martial audience entertain;
Wondering to find a body, free by fate
From steel, and which could even that steel rebate.
Amazed, their admiration they renew;
And scarce Pelides could believe it true.
Then Nestor, thus:—What once this age has known,
In fated Cygnus, and in him alone,
These eyes have seen in Cæneus long before,
Whose body not a thousand swords could bore.
Cæneus in courage and in strength excelled,
And still his Othrys with his fame is filled;
But what did most his martial deeds adorn,
(Though, since, he changed his sex,) a woman born.—
A novelty so strange, and full of fate,
His listening audience asked him to relate.
Achilles thus commends their common suit:—
O father, first for prudence in repute,
Tell, with that eloquence so much thy own,
What thou hast heard, or what of Cæneus known;
What was he, whence his change of sex begun,
What trophies, joined in wars with thee, he won?
Who conquered him, and in what fatal strife
The youth, without a wound, could lose his life?—
Neleides then:—Though tardy age, and time,
Have shrunk my sinews, and decayed my prime;
Though much I have forgotten of my store,
Yet, not exhausted, I remember more.

Of all that arms atchieved, or peace designed,
That action still is fresher in my mind
Than aught beside. If reverend age can give
To faith a sanction, in my third I live.
'Twas in my second century, I surveyed
Young Cænis, then a fair Thessalian maid.
Cænis the bright was born to high command;
A princess, and a native of thy land,
Divine Achilles; every tongue proclaimed
Her beauty, and her eyes all hearts inflamed.
Peleus, thy sire, perhaps had sought her bed,
Among the rest; but he had either led
Thy mother then, or was by promise tied;
But she to him, and all, alike her love denied.
It was her fortune once, to take her way
Along the sandy margin of the sea;
The Power of Ocean viewed her as she passed,
And, loved as soon as seen, by force embraced.
So fame reports. Her virgin treasure seized,
And his new joys the ravisher so pleased,
That thus, transported, to the nymph he cried;
Ask what thou wilt, no prayer shall be denied.
This also fame relates; the haughty fair,
Who not the rape even of a god could bear,
This answer, proud, returned:—To mighty wrongs,
A mighty recompence, of right, belongs.
Give me no more to suffer such a shame;
But change the woman for a better name;
One gift for all.—She said, and, while she spoke,
A stern, majestic, manly tone she took.
A man she was; and, as the Godhead swore,
To Cæneus turned, who Cænis was before.
To this the lover adds, without request,
No force of steel should violate his breast.
Glad of the gift, the new-made warrior goes,
And arms among the Greeks, and longs for equal foes.
Now brave Pirithous, bold Ixion's son,
The love of fair Hippodame had won.

The cloud-begotten race, * half men, half beast,
Invited, came to grace the nuptial feast.
In a cool cave's recess the treat was made,
Whose entrance trees with spreading boughs o'ershade.
They sat; and, summoned by the bridegroom, came,
To mix with those, the Lapithæan name:
Nor wanted I; the roofs with joy resound;
And Hymen, Iö Hymen, rung around.
Raised altars shone with holy fires; the bride,
Lovely herself (and lovely by her side
A bevy of bright nymphs, with sober grace,)
Came glittering like a star, and took her place;
Her heavenly form beheld, all wished her joy,
And little wanted, but in vain their wishes all employ.†
For one, most brutal of the brutal blood,
Or whether wine or beauty fired his blood,
Or both at once, beheld with lustful eyes
The bride; at once resolved to make his prize.
Down went the board, and, fastening on her hair,
He seized with sudden force the frighted fair.
'Twas Eurytus began; his bestial kind
His crime pursued; and each as pleased his mind,
Or her, whom chance presented, took; the feast
An image of a taken town expressed.
The cave resounds with female shrieks: we rise,
Mad with revenge, to make a swift reprise:
And Theseus first:—What frenzy has possessed,
O Eurytus, he cried, thy brutal breast,
To wrong Pirithous, and not him alone,
But, while I live, two friends conjoined in one?

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* The Centaurs, a people of Thessaly, said to be begotten by Ixion, on the cloud which he took for Juno.

† ———*Felicem diximus illa*
Conjuge Pirithoum: quod pœne fefellimus omen.

The translation is somewhat obscure; it means, "All wished her joy, and it had nearly happened that all had wished it in vain."

To justify his threat, he thrusts aside
The crowd of Centaurs, and redeems the bride.
The monster nought replied; for words were vain,
And deeds could only deeds unjust maintain;
But answers with his hand, and forward pressed,
With blows redoubled, on his face and breast.
An ample goblet stood, of antique mould,
And rough with figures of the rising gold;
The hero snatched it up, and tossed in air
Full at the front of the foul ravisher:
He falls, and falling vomits forth a flood
Of wine, and foam, and brains, and mingled blood.
Half roaring, and half neighing through the hall,
Arms, arms! the double-formed with fury call,
To wreak their brother's death. A medley flight
Of bowls and jars, at first, supply the fight,
Once instruments of feasts, but now of fate;
Wine animates their rage, and arms their hate.
Bold Amycus from the robbed vestry brings
The chalices of heaven, and holy things
Of precious weight; a sconce, that hung on high,
With tapers filled, to light the sacristy,
Torn from the cord, with his unhallowed hand
He threw amid the Lapithæan band.
On Celadon the ruin fell, and left
His face of feature and of form bereft;
So, when some brawny sacrificer knocks,
Before an altar led, an offered ox,
His eye-balls, rooted out, are thrown to ground,
His nose dismantled in his mouth is found,
His jaws, cheeks, front, one undistinguished wound.
This, Belates, the avenger, could not brook;
But, by the foot, a maple-board he took,
And hurled at Amycus; his chin is bent
Against his chest, and down the Centaur sent
Whom, sputtering bloody teeth, the second blow
Of his drawn sword dispatched to shades below.

Grineus was near; and cast a furious look
On the side-altar, censed with sacred smoke,
And bright with flaming fires; The gods, he cried,
Have with their holy trade our hands supplied:
Why use we not their gifts?—Then from the floor
An altar-stone he heaved, with all the load it bore;
Altar and altar's freight together flew,
Where thickest thronged the Lapithæan crew,
And, at once, Broteas and Oryus slew.
Oryus' mother, Mycale, was known
Down from her sphere to draw the labouring moon.
Exadius cried,—Unpunished shall not go
This fact, if arms are found against the foe.—
He looked about, where on a pine were spread
The votive horns of a stag's branching head:
At Grineus these he throws; so just they fly,
That the sharp antlers stuck in either eye.
Breathless and blind he fell; with blood besmeared,
His eye-balls beaten out hung dangling on his beard.
Fierce Rhætus from the hearth a burning brand
Selects, and whirling waves, till from his hand
The fire took flame; then dashed it from the right,
On fair Charaxus' temples, near the sight:
The whistling pest came on, and pierced the bone,
And caught the yellow hair, that shrivelled while it shone;
Caught, like dry stubble fired, or like seerwood;
Yet from the wound ensued no purple flood,
But looked a bubbling mass of frying blood.
His blazing locks sent forth a crackling sound,
And hissed, like red-hot iron within the smithy drowned.
The wounded warrior shook his flaming hair,
Then (what a team of horse could hardly rear,)
He heaves the threshold-stone, but could not throw;
The weight itself forbad the threatened blow;

Which, dropping from his lifted arms, came down
Full on Cometes' head, and crushed his crown.
Nor Rhætus then retained his joy; but said,
So by their fellows may our foes be sped.—
Then with redoubled strokes he plies his head:
The burning lever not deludes his pains,
But drives the battered skull within the brains.
Thus flushed, the conqueror, with force renewed,
Evagrus, Dryas, Corythus, pursued.
First, Corythus, with downy cheeks, he slew;
Whose fall when fierce Evagrus had in view,
He cried,—What palm is from a beardless prey?
Rhætus prevents what more he had to say;
And drove within his mouth the fiery death,
Which entered hissing in, and choked his breath.
At Dryas next he flew; but weary chance
No longer would the same success advance;
But, while he whirled in fiery circles round
The brand, a sharpened stake strong Dryas found,
And in the shoulder's joint inflicts the wound.
The weapon struck; which, roaring out with pain,
He drew; nor longer durst the fight maintain,
But turned his back for fear, and fled amain.
With him fled Orneus, with like dread possessed;
Thaumas and Medon, wounded in the breast,
And Mermeros, in the late race renowned,
Now limping ran, and tardy with his wound.
Pholus and Melaneus from fight withdrew,
And Abas maimed, who boars encountering slew;
And augur Astylos, whose art in vain
From fight dissuaded the four-footed train,
Now beat the hoof with Nessus on the plain;
But to his fellow cried, Be safely slow;
Thy death deferred is due to great Alcides' bow.—
Meantime, strong Dryas urged his chance so well,
That Lycidas, Areos, Imbreus fell;

All, one by one, and fighting face to face:
Crenæus fled, to fall with more disgrace;
For, fearful while he looked behind, he bore,
Betwixt his nose and front, the blow before.
Amid the noise and tumult of the fray,
Snoring and drunk with wine, Aphidas lay.
Even then the bowl within his hand he kept,
And on a bear's rough hide securely slept.
Him Phorbas with his flying dart transfixed;
Take thy next draught with Stygian waters mixed,
And sleep thy fill, the insulting victor cried;
Surprised with death unfelt, the Centaur died:
The ruddy vomit, as he breathed his soul,
Repassed his throat, and filled his empty bowl.
I saw Petræus' arms employed around
A well-grown oak, to root it from the ground.
This way, and that, he wrenched the fibrous bands;
The trunk was like a sapling in his hands,
And still obeyed the bent: while thus he stood,
Perithous' dart drove on, and nailed him to the wood.
Lycus and Chromys fell, by him oppressed:
Helops and Dictys added to the rest
A nobler palm: Helops, through either ear
Transfixed, received the penetrating spear
This Dictys saw; and, seized with sudden fright,
Leapt headlong from the hill of steepy height.
And crushed an ash beneath, that could not bear his weight.
The shattered tree receives his fall, and strikes,
Within his full-blown paunch, the sharpened spikes.
Strong Aphareus had heaved a mighty stone,
The fragment of a rock, and would have thrown;
But Theseus, with a club of hardened oak,
The cubit-bone of the bold Centaur broke,
And left him maimed, nor seconded the stroke;
Then leapt on tall Bianor's back; (who bore
No mortal burden but his own, before,)

Pressed with his knees his sides; the double man,
His speed with spurs increased, unwilling ran.
One hand the hero fastened on his locks;
His other plyed him with repeated strokes.
The club hung round his ears, and battered brows;
He falls; and, lashing up his heels, his rider throws.
The same Herculean arms Nedymnus wound,
And lay by him Lycotas on the ground;
And Hippasus, whose beard his breast invades;
And Ripheus, haunter of the woodland shades;
And Tereus, used with mountain-bears to strive;
And from their dens to draw the indignant beasts alive.
Demoleon could not bear this hateful sight,
Or the long fortune of the Athenian knight;
But pulled with all his force, to disengage
From earth a pine, the product of an age.
The root stuck fast: the broken trunk he sent
At Theseus: Theseus frustrates his intent,
And leaps aside, by Pallas warned, the blow
To shun: (for so he said; and we believed it so.)
Yet not in vain the enormous weight was cast,
Which Crantor's body sundered at the waist:
Thy father's squire, Achilles, and his care;
Whom, conquered in the Dolopeian war,
Their king, his present ruin to prevent,
A pledge of peace implored, to Peleus sent.
Thy sire, with grieving eyes, beheld his fate;
And cried, Not long, loved Crantor, shalt thou wait
Thy vowed revenge.—At once he said, and threw
His ashen-spear, which quivered as it flew,
With all his force and all his soul applied;
The sharp point entered in the Centaur's side:
Both hands, to wrench it out, the monster joined,
And wrenched it out, but left the steel behind.
Stuck in his lungs it stood; enraged he rears
His hoofs, and down to ground thy father bears.

Thus trampled under foot, his shield defends
His head; his other hand the lance portends.
Even while he lay extended on the dust,
He sped the Centaur, with one single thrust.
Two more his lance before transfixed from far,
And two his sword had slain in closer war.
To these was added Dorylas; who spread
A bull's two goring horns around his head.
With these he pushed; in blood already dyed,
Him, fearless, I approached, and thus defied;—
Now, monster, now, by proof it shall appear,
Whether thy horns are sharper, or my spear.—
At this, I threw; for want of other ward,
He lifted up his hand, his front to guard.
His hand it passed, and fixed it to his brow.
Loud shouts of ours attend the lucky blow:
Him Peleus finished, with a second wound,
Which through the navel pierced; he reeled around,
And dragged his dangling bowels on the ground;
Trod what he dragged, and what he trod he crushed;
And to his mother-earth, with empty belly, rushed.
Nor could thy form, O Cyllarus, foreshow
Thy fate, if form to monsters men allow:
Just bloomed thy beard, thy beard of golden hue;
Thy locks, in golden waves, about thy shoulders flew.
Sprightly thy look; thy shapes in every part
So clean, as might instruct the sculptor's art,
As far as man extended; where began
The beast, the beast was equal to the man.
Add but a horse's head and neck, and he,
O Castor, was a courser worthy thee.
So was his back proportioned for the seat;
So rose his brawny chest; so swiftly moved his feet.
Coal-black his colour, but like jet it shone;
His legs and flowing tail were white alone.

Beloved by many maidens of his kind,
But fair Hylonome possessed his mind;
Hylonome, for features, and for face,
Excelling all the nymphs of double race.
Nor less her blandishments, than beauty, move;
At once both loving, and confessing love.
For him she dressed; for him with female care
She combed, and set in curls, her auburn hair.
Of roses, violets, and lilies mixed,
And sprigs of flowing rosemary betwixt,
She formed the chaplet, that adorned her front;
In waters of the Pegasæan fount,
And in the streams that from the fountain play,
She washed her face, and bathed her twice a day.
The scarf of furs, that hung below her side,
Was ermine, or the panther's spotted pride;
Spoils of no common beast. With equal flame
They loved; their sylvan pleasures were the same:
All day they hunted; and when day expired,
Together to some shady cave retired.
Invited, to the nuptials both repair;
And, side by side, they both engage in war.
Uncertain from what hand, a flying dart
At Cyllarus was sent, which pierced his heart.
The javelin drawn from out the mortal wound,
He faints with staggering steps, and seeks the ground:
The fair within her arms received his fall,
And strove his wandering spirits to recal;
And while her hand the streaming blood opposed,
Joined face to face, his lips with hers she closed.
Stifled with kisses, a sweet death he dies;
She fills the fields with undistinguished cries;
At least her words were in her clamour drowned;
For my stunned ears received no vocal sound.
In madness of her grief, she seized the dart
New-drawn, and reeking from her lover's heart;

To her bare bosom the sharp point applied,
And wounded fell; and, falling by his side,
Embraced him in her arms, and thus embracing died.

Even still, methinks, I see Phæocomes;
Strange was his habit, and as odd his dress. *
Six lions hides, with thongs together fast,
His upper part defended to his waist;
And where man ended, the continued vest,
Spread on his back, the houss and trappings of a beast.
A stump too heavy for a team to draw,
(It seems a fable, though the fact I saw,)
He threw at Pholon; the descending blow
Divides the skull, and cleaves his head in two.
The brains, from nose and mouth, and either ear,
Came issuing out, as through a colendar
The curdled milk; or from the press the whey,
Driven down by weights above, is drained away.

But him, while stooping down to spoil the slain,
Pierced through the paunch, I tumbled on the plain.
Then Chthonius and Teleboas I slew;
A fork the former armed; a dart his fellow threw:
The javelin wounded me; behold the scar.
Then was my time to seek the Trojan war;
Then I was Hector's match in open field;
But he was then unborn, at least a child;
Now, I am nothing. I forbear to tell
By Periphantes how Pyretus fell,
The Centaur by the Knight; nor will I stay
On Amphix, or what deaths he dealt that day;
What honour, with a pointless lance, he won,
Stuck in the front of a four-footed man;

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* The *dress* seems to apply to the clothing of the Centaur's human part, the *habit* to the furniture of the horse; perhaps, however, *habit* means his mode of life.

What fame young Macareus obtained in fight,
Or dwell on Nessus, now returned from flight;
How prophet Mopsus not alone divined,
Whose valour equalled his foreseeing mind.
Already Cæneus, with his conquering hand,
Had slaughtered five, the boldest of their band;
Pyrachmus, Helymus, Antimachus,
Bromus the brave, and stronger Stiphelus;
Their names I numbered, and remember well,
No trace remaining, by what wounds they fell.
Latreus, the bulkiest of the double race,
Whom the spoiled arms of slain Halesus grace,
In years retaining still his youthful might,
Though his black hairs were interspersed with white,
Betwixt the embattled ranks began to prance,
Proud of his helm, and Macedonian lance;
And rode the ring around, that either host
Might hear him, while he made this empty boast.
And from a strumpet shall we suffer shame?
For Cænis still, not Cæneus, is thy name;
And still the native softness of thy kind
Prevails, and leaves the woman in thy mind.
Remember what thou wert; what price was paid
To change thy sex, to make thee not a maid;
And but a man in show; go card and spin,
And leave the business of the war to men.—
While thus the boaster exercised his pride,
The fatal spear of Cæneus reached his side;
Just in the mixture of the kinds it ran,
Betwixt the nether breast and upper man.
The monster, mad with rage, and stung with smart,
His lance directed at the hero's heart:
It strook; but bounded from his hardened breast,
Like hail from tiles, which the safe house invest;
Nor seemed the stroke with more effect to come,
Than a small pebble falling on a drum.

He next his faulchion tried, in closer fight;
But the keen faulchion had no power to bite.
He thrust; the blunted point returned again:—
Since downright blows, he cried, and thrusts are vain,
I'll prove his side;—in strong embraces held,
He proved his side; his side the sword repelled;
His hollow belly echoed to the stroke:
Untouched his body, as a solid rock;
Aimed at his neck at last, the blade in shivers broke.
The impassive knight stood idle, to deride
His rage, and offered oft his naked side;
At length, Now, monster, in thy turn, he cried,
Try thou the strength of Cæneus:—at the word
He thrust; and in his shoulder plunged the sword.
Then writhed his hand; and, as he drove it down
Deep in his breast, made many wounds in one.
The Centaurs saw, enraged, the unhoped * success,
And, rushing on in crowds, together press.
At him, and him alone, their darts they threw;
Repulsed they from his fated body flew.
Amazed they stood; till Monychus began,—
O shame, a nation conquered by a man!
A woman-man; yet more a man is he,
Than all our race; and what he was, are we.
Now, what avail our nerves? the united force
Of two the strongest creatures, man and horse?
Nor goddess-born, nor of Ixion's seed
We seem, (a lover built for Juno's bed,)
Mastered by this half man. Whole mountains throw
With woods at once, and bury him below.
This only way remains. Nor need we doubt
To choke the soul within, though not to force it out.

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* *Unhoped* for *unexpected*. See note on "death unhoped," in the fable of the Cock and the Fox, Vol. XI.

Heap weights, instead of wounds:—he chanced to see
Where southern storms had rooted up a tree;
This, raised from earth, against the foe he threw;
The example shewn, his fellow-brutes pursue.
With forest-loads the warrior they invade;
Othrys and Pelion soon were void of shade,
And spreading groves were naked mountains made
Pressed with the burden, Cæneus pants for breath,
And on his shoulders bears the wooden death.
To heave the intolerable weight he tries;
At length it rose above his mouth and eyes.
Yet still he heaves; and, struggling with despair,
Shakes all aside, and gains a gulp of air;
A short relief, which but prolongs his pain:
He faints by fits, and then respires again.
At last, the burden only nods above,
As when an earthquake stirs the Idæan grove.
Doubtful his death; he suffocated seemed
To most; but otherwise our Mopsus deemed,
Who said he saw a yellow bird arise
From out the pile, and cleave the liquid skies.
I saw it too, with golden feathers bright,
Nor e'er before beheld so strange a sight;
Whom Mopsus viewing, as it soared around
Our troop, and heard the pinions' rattling sound,
All hail, he cried, thy country's grace and love;
Once first of men below, now first of birds above!—
Its author to the story gave belief;
For us, our courage was increased by grief:
Ashamed to see a single man, pursued
With odds, to sink beneath a multitude,
We pushed the foe, and forced to shameful flight:
Part fell, and part escaped by favour of the night.
This tale, by Nestor told, did much displease
Tlepolemus, the seed of Hercules;

For often he had heard his father say,
That he himself was present at the fray,
And more than shared the glories of the day.
Old Chronicle, he said, among the rest,
You might have named Alcides at the least;
Is he not worth your praise?—The Pylian prince
Sighed ere he spoke, then made this proud defence:
My former woes, in long oblivion drowned,
I would have lost, but you renew the wound;
Better to pass him o'er, than to relate
The cause I have your mighty sire to hate.
His fame has filled the world, and reached the sky;
Which, oh, I wish with truth I could deny!
We praise not Hector, though his name we know
Is great in arms; 'tis hard to praise a foe.
He, your great father, levelled to the ground
Messenia's towers; nor better fortune found
Elis, and Pylas; that, a neighbouring state,
And this, my own; both guiltless of their fate.
To pass the rest, twelve, wanting one, he slew,
My brethren, who their birth from Neleus drew;
All youths of early promise, had they lived;
By him they perished; I alone survived.
The rest were easy conquest; but the fate
Of Periclymenos is wonderous to relate.
To him our common grandsire of the main
Had given to change his form, and, changed, resume again.
Varied at pleasure, every shape he tried,
And in all beasts Alcides still defied;
Vanquished on earth, at length he soared above,
Changed to the bird, that bears the bolt of Jove.
The new dissembled eagle, now endued
With peak and pounces, Hercules pursued,
And cuffed his manly cheeks, and tore his face,
Then, safe retired, and towered in empty space.

Alcides bore not long his flying foe,
But, bending his inevitable bow,
Reached him in air, suspended as he stood,
And in his pinion fixed the feathered wood.
Light was the wound; but in the sinew hung
The point, and his disabled wing unstrung.
He wheeled in air, and stretched his vans in vain;
His vans no longer could his flight sustain;
For, while one gathered wind, one unsupplied
Hung drooping down, nor poised his other side.
He fell; the shaft, that slightly was impressed,
Now from his heavy fall with weight increased,
Drove through his neck aslant; he spurns the ground,
And the soul issues through the weazon's wound.
Now, brave commander of the Rhodian seas,
What praise is due from me to Hercules?
Silence is all the vengeance I decree
For my slain brothers; but 'tis peace with thee.—
Thus with a flowing tongue old Nestor spoke;
Then, to full bowls each other they provoke;
At length, with weariness and wine oppressed,
They rise from table, and withdraw to rest.
The sire of Cygnus, monarch of the main,
Meantime laments his son in battle slain;
And vows the victor's death, nor vows in vain.
For nine long years the smothered pain he bore;
Achilles was not ripe for fate before;
Then when he saw the promised hour was near,
He thus bespoke the god, that guides the year:—
Immortal offspring of my brother Jove,
My brightest nephew, and whom best I love,
Whose hands were joined with mine, to raise the wall
Of tottering Troy, now nodding to her fall;
Dost thou not mourn our power employed in vain,
And the defenders of our city slain?
To pass the rest, could noble Hector lie
Unpitied, dragged around his native Troy

And yet the murderer lives; himself by far
A greater plague, than all the wasteful war:
He lives; the proud Pelides lives, to boast
Our town destroyed, our common labour lost.
O could I meet him! But I wish too late,
To prove my trident is not in his fate.
But let him try (for that's allowed) thy dart,
And pierce his only penetrable part.—
Apollo bows to the superior throne,
And to his uncle's anger adds his own;
Then, in a cloud involved, he takes his flight,
Where Greeks and Trojans mixed in mortal fight;
And found out Paris, lurking where he stood,
And stained his arrows with plebeian blood.
Phœbus to him alone the god confessed,
Then to the recreant knight he thus addressed:—
Dost thou not blush, to spend thy shafts in vain
On a degenerate and ignoble train?
If fame, or better vengeance, be thy care,
There aim, and with one arrow end the war.—
He said; and shewed from far the blazing shield
And sword, which but Achilles none could wield;
And how he moved a god, and mowed the standing field.
The deity himself directs aright
The envenomed shaft, and wings the fatal flight.
Thus fell the foremost of the Grecian name,
And he, the base adulterer, boasts the fame;
A spectacle to glad the Trojan train,
And please old Priam, after Hector slain.
If by a female hand he had foreseen
He was to die, his wish had rather been
The lance and double axe of the fair warrior queen.
And now, the terror of the Trojan field,
The Grecian honour, ornament, and shield,

High on a pile, the unconquered chief is placed;
The god, * that armed him first, consumed at last.
Of all the mighty man, the small remains
A little urn, and scarcely filled, contains;
Yet, great in Homer, still Achilles lives,
And, equal to himself, himself survives.
His buckler owns its former lord, and brings
New cause of strife betwixt contending kings;
Who worthiest, after him, his sword to wield,
Or wear his armour, or sustain his shield
Even Diomede sat mute, with downcast eyes,
Conscious of wanted worth to win the prize;
Nor Menelaus presumed these arms to claim,
Nor he the king of men, a greater name.
Two rivals only rose; Laertes' son,
And the vast bulk of Ajax Telamon.
The king, who cherished each with equal love,
And from himself all envy would remove,
Left both to be determined by the laws,
And to the Grecian chiefs transferred the cause.

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* Vulcan, the god of fire.

THE

SPEECHES

OF

AJAX AND ULYSSES:

FROM THE THIRTEENTH BOOK OF

OVID'S METAMORPHOSES.

The chiefs were set, the soldiers crowned the field;
To these the master of the sevenfold shield
Upstarted fierce; and, kindled with disdain,
Eager to speak, unable to contain
His boiling rage, he rolled his eyes around
The shore, and Grecian gallies hauled a-ground.
Then stretching out his hands, O Jove, he cried,
Must then our cause before the fleet be tried?
And dares Ulysses for the prize contend,
In sight of what he durst not once defend;
But basely fled, that memorable day,
When I from Hector's hands redeemed the flaming
prey?
So much 'tis safer at the noisy bar
With words to flourish, than engage in war.

By different methods we maintained our right,
Nor am I made to talk, nor he to fight.
In bloody fields I labour to be great;
His arms are a smooth tongue, and soft deceit.
Nor need I speak my deeds, for those you see;
The sun and day are witnesses for me.
Let him, who fights unseen, relate his own,
And vouch the silent stars, and conscious moon.
Great is the prize demanded, I confess,
But such an abject rival makes it less.
That gift, those honours, he but hoped to gain,
Can leave no room for Ajax to be vain;
Losing he wins, because his name will be
Ennobled by defeat, who durst contend with me.
Were mine own valour questioned, yet my blood
Without that plea would make my title good;
My sire was Telamon, whose arms, employed
With Hercules, these Trojan walls destroyed;
And who before, with Jason, sent from Greece,
In the first ship brought home the golden fleece:
Great Telamon from Æacus derives
His birth: (the inquisitor of guilty lives
In shades below; where Sisyphus, whose son
This thief is thought, rolls up the restless heavy stone.)
Just Æacus the king of gods above
Begot; thus Ajax is the third from Jove.
Nor should I seek advantage from my line,
Unless, Achilles, it were mixed with thine:
As next of kin Achilles' arms I claim;
This fellow would ingraft a foreign name
Upon our stock, and the Sisyphian seed
By fraud and theft asserts his father's breed.
Then must I lose these arms, because I came
To fight uncalled, a voluntary name?
Nor shunned the cause, but offered you my aid,
While he, long lurking, was to war betrayed:

Forced to the field he came, but in the rear,
And feigned distraction, to conceal his fear;
Till one more cunning caught him in the snare,
Ill for himself, and dragged him into war.
Now let a hero's arms a coward vest,
And he, who shunned all honours, gain the best;
And let me stand excluded from my right,
Robbed of my kinsman's arms, who first appeared in fight.
Better for us at home he had remained,
Had it been true the madness which he feigned,
Or so believed; the less had been our shame,
The less his counselled crime, which brands the Grecian name;
Nor Philoctetes had been left inclosed
In a bare isle, to wants and pains exposed;
Where to the rocks, with solitary groans,
His sufferings and our baseness he bemoans,
And wishes (so may heaven his wish fulfil!)
The due reward to him who caused his ill.
Now he, with us to Troy's destruction sworn,
Our brother of the war, by whom are borne
Alcides' arrows, pent in narrow bounds,
With cold and hunger pinched, and pained with wounds,
To find him food and clothing, must employ
Against the birds the shafts due to the fate of Troy.
Yet still he lives, and lives from treason free,
Because he left Ulysses' company;
Poor Palamede might wish, so void of aid,
Rather to have been left, than so to death betrayed.
The coward bore the man immortal spite,
Who shamed him out of madness into fight;
Nor daring otherwise to vent his hate,
Accused him first of treason to the state;
And then, for proof, produced the golden store
Himself had hidden in his tent before.

Thus of two champions he deprived our host,
By exile one, and one by treason lost.
Thus fights Ulysses, thus his fame extends,
A formidable man, but to his friends;
Great, for what greatness is in words and sound;
Even faithful Nestor less in both is found;
But, that he might without a rival reign,
He left his faithful Nestor on the plain;
Forsook his friend even at his utmost need,
Who, tired, and tardy with his wounded steed,
Cried out for aid, and called him by his name;
But cowardice has neither ears nor shame.
Thus fled the good old man, bereft of aid,
And, for as much as lay in him, betrayed.
That this is not a fable forged by me,
Like one of his, an Ulyssean lie,
I vouch even Diomede, who, though his friend,
Cannot that act excuse, much less defend:
He called him back aloud, and taxed his fear;
And sure enough he heard, but durst not hear.
The gods with equal eyes on mortals look;
He justly was forsaken, who forsook;
Wanted that succour he refused to lend,
Found every fellow such another friend.
No wonder if he roared, that all might hear
His elocution was increased by fear;
I heard, I ran, I found him out of breath,
Pale, trembling, and half-dead with fear of death.
Though he had judged himself by his own laws,
And stood condemned, I helped the common cause:
With my broad buckler hid him from the foe,
(Even the shield trembled as he lay below,)
And from impending fate the coward freed;
Good heaven forgive me for so bad a deed!
If still he will persist, and urge the strife,
First let him give me back his forfeit life;

Let him return to that opprobrious field,
Again creep under my protecting shield ;
Let him lie wounded, let the foe be near,
And let his quivering heart confess his fear ;
There put him in the very jaws of fate,
And let him plead his cause in that estate ;
And yet, when snatched from death, when from below
My lifted shield I loosed, and let him go,
Good heavens, how light he rose! with what a bound
He sprung from earth, forgetful of his wound !
How fresh, how eager then his feet to ply!
Who had not strength to stand, had speed to fly !
Hector came on, and brought the gods along;
Fear seized alike the feeble and the strong;
Each Greek was an Ulysses; such a dread
The approach, and even the sound, of Hector bred;
Him, fleshed with slaughter, and with conquest crowned,
I met, and overturned him to the ground.
When after, matchless as he deemed in might,
He challenged all our host to single fight,
All eyes were fixed on me; the lots were thrown,
But for your champion I was wished alone.
Your vows were heard; we fought, and neither yield;
Yet I returned unvanquished from the field.
With Jove to friend. the insulting Trojan came,
And menaced us with force, our fleet with flame ;
Was it the strength of this tongue-valiant lord,
In that black hour, that saved you from the sword?
Or was my breast exposed alone, to brave
A thousand swords, a thousand ships to save,
The hopes of your return? and can you yield,
For a saved fleet, less than a single shield?
Think it no boast, O Grecians, if I deem
These arms want Ajax, more than Ajax them ;

Or, I with them an equal honour share;
They, honoured to be worn, and I, to wear.
Will he compare my courage with his slight?
As well he may compare the day with night.
Night is indeed the province of his reign;
Yet all his dark exploits no more contain
Than a spy taken, and a sleeper slain;
A priest made prisoner, Pallas made a prey;
But none of all these actions done by day;
Nor aught of these was done, and Diomede away.
If on such petty merits you confer
So vast a prize, let each his portion share;
Make a just dividend; and, if not all,
The greater part to Diomede will fall.
But why for Ithacus such arms as those,
Who naked, and by night, invades his foes?
The glittering helm by moonlight will proclaim
The latent robber, and prevent his game;
Nor could he hold his tottering head upright
Beneath that motion, or sustain the weight;
Nor that right arm could toss the beamy lance,
Much less the left that ampler shield advance;
Ponderous with precious weight, and rough with cost
Of the round world in rising gold embossed.
That orb would ill become his hand to wield,
And look, as for the gold he stole the shield;
Which should your error on the wretch bestow,
It would not frighten, but allure the foe.
Why asks he what avails him not in fight,
And would but cumber and retard his flight,
In which his only excellence is placed?
You give him death, that intercept his haste.
Add, that his own is yet a maiden-shield,
Nor the least dint has suffered in the field,
Guiltless of fight; mine, battered, hewed, and bored,
Worn out of service, must forsake his lord.

What farther need of words our right to scan?
My arguments are deeds, let action speak the man.
Since from a champion's arms the strife arose,
So cast the glorious prize amid the foes;
Then send us to redeem both arms and shield,
And let him wear, who wins them in the field.—
He said:—A murmur from the multitude,
Or somewhat like a stifled shout, ensued;
Till from his seat arose Laertes' son,
Looked down a while, and paused ere he begun;
Then to the expecting audience raised his look,
And not without prepared attention spoke;
Soft was his tone, and sober was his face,
Action his words, and words his action grace.
If heaven, my lords, had heard our common prayer,
These arms had caused no quarrel for an heir;
Still great Achilles had his own possessed,
And we with great Achilles had been blessed:
But since hard fate, and heaven's severe decree,
Have ravished him away from you and me,
(At this he sighed, and wiped his eyes, and drew,
Or seemed to draw, some drops of kindly dew,)
Who better can succeed Achilles lost,
Than he who gave Achilles to your host?
This only I request, that neither he
May gain, by being what he seems to be,
A stupid thing, nor I may lose the prize,
By having sense, which heaven to him denies;
Since, great or small, the talent I enjoyed
Was ever in the common cause employed:
Nor let my wit, and wonted eloquence,
Which often has been used in your defence
And in my own, this only time be brought
To bear against myself, and deemed a fault.
Make not a crime, where nature made it none;
For every man may freely use his own.

The deeds of long descended ancestors
Are but by grace of imputation ours,
Theirs in effect; but since he draws his line
From Jove, and seems to plead a right divine,
From Jove, like him, I claim my pedigree,
And am descended in the same degree.
My sire Laertes, was Arcesius' heir,
Arcesius was the son of Jupiter;
No paricide, no banished man, is known
In all my line; let him excuse his own.
Hermes ennobles too my mother's side,
By both my parents to the gods allied.
But not because that on the female part
My blood is better, dare I claim desert,
Or that my sire from parricide is free;
But judge by merit betwixt him and me.
The prize be to the best; provided yet,
That Ajax for a while his kin forget,
And his great sire, and greater uncle's name,
To fortify by them his feeble claim.
Be kindred and relation laid aside,
And honour's cause by laws of honour tried;
For, if he plead proximity of blood,
That empty title is with ease withstood.
Peleus, the hero's sire, more nigh than he,
And Pyrrhus, his undoubted progeny,
Inherit first these trophies of the field;
To Scyros, or to Phthia, send the shield:
And Teucer has an uncle's right, yet he
Waves his pretensions, nor contends with me.
Then, since the cause on pure desert is placed,
Whence shall I take my rise, what reckon last?
I not presume on every act to dwell,
But take these few, in order as they fell.
Thetis, who knew the fates, applied her care
To keep Achilles in disguise from war;

And, till the threatening influence were past,
A woman's habit on the hero cast:
All eyes were cozened by the borrowed vest,
And Ajax (never wiser than the rest)
Found no Pelides there. At length I came
With proffered wares to this pretended dame;
She, not discovered by her mien or voice,
Betrayed her manhood by her manly choice;
And, while on female toys her fellows look,
Grasped in her warlike hand, a javelin shook;
Whom, by this act revealed, I thus bespoke:—
O goddess-born! resist not heaven's decree,
The fall of Ilium is reserved for thee;—
Then seized him, and, produced in open light,
Sent blushing to the field the fatal knight.
Mine then are all his actions of the war;
Great Telephus was conquered by my spear,
And after cured; to me the Thebans owe,
Lesbos and Tenedos, their overthrow;
Scyros and Cylla; not on all to dwell,
By me Lyrnessus and strong Chrysa fell;
And, since I sent the man who Hector slew,
To me the noble Hector's death is due.
Those arms I put into his living hand;
Those arms, Pelides dead, I now demand.

When Greece was injured in the Spartan prince,
And met at Aulis to revenge the offence,
'Twas a dead calm, or adverse blasts, that reigned,
And in the port the wind-bound fleet detained:
Bad signs were seen, and oracles severe
Were daily thundered in our general's ear,
That by his daughter's blood we must appease
Diana's kindled wrath, and free the seas.
Affection, interest, fame, his heart assailed,
But soon the father o'er the king prevailed;
Bold, on himself he took the pious crime,
As angry with the gods as they with him.

No subject could sustain their sovereign's look,
Till this hard enterprize I undertook;
I only durst the imperial power controul,
And undermined the parent in his soul;
Forced him to exert the king for common good,
And pay our ransom with his daughter's blood.
Never was cause more difficult to plead,
Than where the judge against himself decreed;
Yet this I won by dint of argument.
The wrongs his injured brother underwent,
And his own office, shamed him to consent.
'Twas harder yet to move the mother's mind,
And to this heavy task was I designed:
Reasons against her love I knew were vain;
I circumvented whom I could not gain.
Had Ajax been employed, our slackened sails
Had still at Aulis waited happy gales.
Arrived at Troy, your choice was fixed on me,
A fearless envoy, fit for a bold embassy.
Secure, I entered through the hostile court,
Glittering with steel, and crowded with resort:
There, in the midst of arms, I plead our cause,
Urge the foul rape, and violated laws;
Accuse the foes as authors of the strife,
Reproach the ravisher, demand the wife.
Priam, Antenor, and the wiser few,
I moved; but Paris and his lawless crew
Scarce held their hands, and lifted swords; but stood
In act to quench their impious thirst of blood.
This Menelaus knows; exposed to share
With me the rough preludium of the war.
Endless it were to tell what I have done,
In arms, or counsel, since the siege begun.
The first encounters past, the foe repelled,
They skulked within the town, we kept the field.
War seemed asleep for nine long years; at length,
Both sides resolved to push, we tried our strength.

Now what did Ajax while our arms took breath,
Versed only in the gross mechanic trade of death?
If you require my deeds, with ambushed arms
I trapped the foe, or tired with false alarms;
Secured the ships, drew lines along the plain,
The fainting cheered, chastised the rebel-train,
Provided forage, our spent arms renewed;
Employed at home, or sent abroad, the common cause pursued.
The king, deluded in a dream by Jove,
Despaired to take the town, and ordered to remove.
What subject durst arraign the power supreme,
Producing Jove to justify his dream?
Ajax might wish the soldiers to retain
From shameful flight, but wishes were in vain;
As wanting of effect had been his words,
Such as of course his thundering tongue affords.
But did this boaster threaten, did he pray,
Or by his own example urge their stay?
None, none of these, but ran himself away.
I saw him run, and was ashamed to see;
Who plied his feet so fast to get aboard as he?
Then speeding through the place, I made a stand,
And loudly cried,—O base degenerate band,
To leave a town already in your hand!
After so long expence of blood, for fame,
To bring home nothing but perpetual shame!—
These words, or what I have forgotten since,
For grief inspired me then with eloquence,
Reduced their minds; they leave the crowded port,
And to their late forsaken camp resort.
Dismayed the council met; this man was there,
But mute, and not recovered of his fear:
Thersites taxed the king, and loudly railed,
But his wide opening mouth with blows I sealed.
Then, rising, I excite their souls to fame,
And kindle sleeping virtue into flame.

From thence, whatever he performed in fight
Is justly mine, who drew him back from flight.
Which of the Grecian chiefs consorts with thee?
But Diomede desires my company,
And still communicates his praise with me.
As guided by a god, secure he goes,
Armed with my fellowship, amid the foes;
And sure no little merit I may boast,
Whom such a man selects from such an host.
Unforced by lots, I went without affright,
To dare with him the dangers of the night;
On the same errand sent, we met the spy
Of Hector, double-tongued, and used to lie;
Him I dispatched, but not till, undermined,
I drew him first to tell what treacherous Troy designed.
My task performed, with praise I had retired,
But, not content with this, to greater praise aspired;
Invaded Rhœsus, and his Thracian crew,
And him, and his, in their own strength, I slew:
Returned a victor, all my vows complete,
With the king's chariot, in his royal seat.
Refuse me now his arms, whose fiery steeds
Were promised to the spy for his nocturnal deeds;*
And let dull Ajax bear away my right,
When all his days outbalance this one night.
Nor fought I darkling still; the sun beheld
With slaughtered Lycians when I strewed the field:
You saw, and counted as I passed along,
Alastor, Cromius, Ceranos the strong,
Alcander, Prytanis, and Halius,
Noemon, Charopes, and Ennomus,

* Dolon demanded the horses of Achilles, as his reward for exploring the Grecian camp, but was intercepted and slain by Ulysses.

Choon, Chersidamas, and five beside,
Men of obscure descent, but courage tried;
All these this hand laid breathless on the ground.
Nor want I proofs of many a manly wound;
All honest, all before; believe not me,
Words may deceive, but credit what you see.
At this he bared his breast, and showed his scars,
As of a furrowed field, well ploughed with wars;
Nor is this part unexercised, said he;
That giant bulk of his from wounds is free;
Safe in his shield he fears no foe to try,
And better manages his blood than I.
But this avails me not; our boaster strove
Not with our foes alone, but partial Jove,
To save the fleet. This I confess is true,
Nor will I take from any man his due;
But, thus assuming all, he robs from you.
Some part of honour to your share will fall;
He did the best indeed, but did not all.
Patroclus in Achilles' arms, and thought
The chief he seemed, with equal ardour fought;
Preserved the fleet, repelled the raging fire,
And forced the fearful Trojans to retire.
But Ajax boasts, that he was only thought
A match for Hector, who the combat sought:
Sure he forgets the king, the chiefs, and me,
All were as eager for the fight as he;
He but the ninth, and, not by public voice,
Or ours preferred, was only fortune's choice:
They fought; nor can our hero boast the event,
For Hector from the field unwounded went.
Why am I forced to name that fatal day,
That snatched the prop and pride of Greece away?
I saw Pelides sink, with pious grief,
And ran in vain, alas! to his relief,
For the brave soul was fled; full of my friend,
I rushed amid the war, his relics to defend;

Nor ceased my toil till I redeemed the prey,
And, loaded with Achilles, marched away.
Those arms, which on these shoulders then I bore,
'Tis just you to these shoulders should restore.
You see I want not nerves, who could sustain
The ponderous ruins of so great a man;
Or if in others equal force you find,
None is endued with a more grateful mind.
Did Thetis then, ambitious in her care,
These arms, thus laboured, for her son prepare,
That Ajax after him the heavenly gift should wear?
For that dull soul to stare, with stupid eyes,
On the learned unintelligible prize?
What are to him the sculptures of the shield,
Heaven's planets, earth, and ocean's watery field?
The Pleiads, Hyads; Less, and Greater Bear,
Undipped in seas; Orion's angry star;
Two differing cities, graved on either hand?
Would he wear arms he cannot understand?
Beside, what wise objections he prepares
Against my late accession to the wars!
Does not the fool perceive his argument
Is with more force against Achilles bent?
For, if dissembling be so great a crime,
The fault is common, and the same in him;
And if he taxes both of long delay,
My guilt is less, who sooner came away.
His pious mother, anxious for his life,
Detained her son; and me, my pious wife.
To them the blossoms of our youth were due;
Our riper manhood we reserved for you.
But grant me guilty, 'tis not much my care,
When with so great a man my guilt I share;
My wit to war the matchless hero brought,
But by this fool he never had been caught.

Nor need I wonder, that on me he threw
Such foul aspersions, when he spares not you:
If Palamede unjustly fell by me,
Your honour suffered in the unjust decree.
I but accused, you doomed; and yet he died,
Convinced of treason, and was fairly tried.
You heard not he was false; your eyes beheld
The traitor manifest, the bribe revealed.
That Philoctetes is on Lemnos left,
Wounded, forlorn, of human aid bereft,
Is not my crime, or not my crime alone;
Defend your justice, for the fact's your own.
'Tis true, the advice was mine; that, staying there,
He might his weary limbs with rest repair,
From a long voyage free, and from a longer war.
He took the counsel, and he lives at least;
The event declares I counselled for the best;
Though faith is all in ministers of state,
For who can promise to be fortunate?
Now since his arrows are the fate of Troy,
Do not my wit, or weak address, employ;
Send Ajax there, with his persuasive sense,
To mollify the man, and draw him thence:
But Xanthus shall run backward; Ida stand
A leafless mountain; and the Grecian band
Shall fight for Troy; if, when my counsels fail,
The wit of heavy Ajax can prevail.
Hard Philoctetes, exercise thy spleen
Against thy fellows, and the king of men;
Curse my devoted head, above the rest,
And wish in arms to meet me, breast to breast;
Yet I the dangerous task will undertake,
And either die myself, or bring thee back.
Nor doubt the same success, as when, before,
The Phrygian prophet to these tents I bore,
Surprised by night, and forced him to declare
In what was placed the fortune of the war;

Heaven's dark decrees and answers to display,
And how to take the town, and where the secret lay.
Yet this I compassed, and from Troy conveyed
The fatal image of their guardian Maid.
That work was mine; for Pallas, though our friend,
Yet while she was in Troy, did Troy defend.
Now what has Ajax done, or what designed?
A noisy nothing, and an empty wind.
If he be what he promises in show,
Why was I sent, and why feared he to go?
Our boasting champion thought the task not light
To pass the guards, commit himself to night;
Not only through a hostile town to pass,
But scale, with deep ascent, the sacred place;
With wandering steps to search the citadel,
And from the priests their patroness to steal;
Then through surrounding foes to force my way,
And bear in triumph home the heavenly prey;
Which had I not, Ajax in vain had held
Before that monstrous bulk his seven-fold shield.
That night to conquer Troy I might be said,
When Troy was liable to conquest made.
Why point'st thou to my partner of the war?
Tydides had indeed a worthy share
In all my toil, and praise; but when thy might
Our ships protected, didst thou singly fight?
All joined, and thou of many wert but one;
I asked no friend, nor had, but him alone;
Who, had he not been well assured, that art
And conduct were of war the better part,
And more availed than strength, my valiant friend
Had urged a better right, than Ajax can pretend;
As good, at least, Eurypylus may claim,
And the more moderate Ajax of the name;
The Cretan king, and his brave charioteer,
And Menelaus, bold with sword and spear:

All these had been my rivals in the shield,
And yet all these to my pretensions yield.
Thy boisterous hands are then of use, when I
With this directing head those hands apply.
Brawn without brain is thine; my prudent care
Foresees, provides, administers the war:
Thy province is to fight; but when shall be
The time to fight, the king consults with me.
No drachm of judgment with thy force is joined;
Thy body is of profit, and my mind.
But, how much more the ship her safety owes
To him who steers, than him that only rows;
By how much more the captain merits praise
Than he who fights, and, fighting, but obeys;
By so much greater is my worth than thine,
Who canst but execute what I design.
What gain'st thou, brutal man, if I confess
Thy strength superior, when thy wit is less?
Mind is the man; I claim my whole desert
From the mind's vigour, and the immortal part.
But you, O Grecian chiefs, reward my care,
Be grateful to your watchman of the war;
For all my labours in so long a space,
Sure I may plead a title to your grace.
Enter the town; I then unbarred the gates,
When I removed their tutelary fates.
By all our common hopes, if hopes they be,
Which I have now reduced to certainty;
By falling Troy, by yonder tottering towers,
And by their taken gods, which now are ours;
Or, if there yet a farther task remains,
To be performed by prudence or by pains;
If yet some desperate action rests behind,
That asks high conduct, and a dauntless mind;
If aught be wanting to the Trojan doom,
Which none but I can manage and o'ercome;

Award those arms I ask, by your decree;
Or give to this what you refuse to me.
He ceased, and, ceasing, with respect he bowed,
And with his hand at once the fatal statue shewed.
Heaven, air, and ocean rung, with loud applause,
And by the general vote he gained his cause.
Thus conduct won the prize, when courage failed,
And eloquence o'er brutal force prevailed.

The Death of Ajax.

He who could often, and alone, withstand
The foe, the fire, and Jove's own partial hand,
Now cannot his unmastered grief sustain,
But yields to rage, to madness, and disdain;
Then snatching out his faulchion,—Thou, said he,
Art mine; Ulysses lays no claim to thee.
O often tried, and ever trusty sword,
Now do thy last kind office to thy lord!
'Tis Ajax who requests thy aid, to show
None but himself, himself could overthrow.—
He said, and with so good a will to die,
Did to his breast the fatal point apply,
It found his heart, a way till then unknown,
Where never weapon entered but his own;
No hands could force it thence, so fixt it stood,
'Till out it rushed, expelled by streams of spouting blood.
The fruitful blood produced a flower, * which grew
On a green stem, and of a purple hue;
Like his, whom unaware Apollo slew.
Inscribed in both, the letters are the same,
But those express the grief, and these the name.

* The Hyacinth.

THE STORY OF

ACIS, POLYPHEMUS, AND GALATEA,

FROM THE THIRTEENTH BOOK OF

OVID'S METAMORPHOSES.

Acis, the lovely youth, whose loss I mourn,
From Faunus and the nymph Symethis born,
Was both his parents' pleasure; but to me
Was all that love could make a lover be.
The gods our minds in mutual bands did join;
I was his only joy, and he was mine.
Now sixteen summers the sweet youth had seen,
And doubtful down began to shade his chin;
When Polyphemus first disturbed our joy,
And loved me fiercely, as I loved the boy.
Ask not which passion in my soul was higher,
My last aversion, or my first desire;
Nor this the greater was, nor that the less,
Both were alike, for both were in excess.
Thee, Venus, thee both heaven and earth obey;
Immense thy power, and boundless is thy sway.
The Cyclops, who defied the ætherial throne,
And thought no thunder louder than his own,

The terror of the woods, and wilder far
Than wolves in plains, or bears in forests are;
The inhuman host, who made his bloody feasts
On mangled members of his butchered guests,
Yet felt the force of love, and fierce desire,
And burnt for me, with unrelenting fire;
Forgot his caverns, and his woolly care,
Assumed the softness of a lover's air,
And combed, with teeth of rakes, his rugged hair.
Now with a crooked scythe his beard he sleeks,
And mows the stubborn stubble of his cheeks;
Now in the crystal stream he looks, to try
His simagres,* and rolls his glaring eye.
His cruelty and thirst of blood are lost;
And ships securely sail along the coast.
The prophet Telemus (arrived by chance
Where Ætna's summits to the seas advance,
Who marked the tracks of every bird that flew,
And sure presages from their flying drew,)
Foretold the Cyclops, that Ulysses' hand
In his broad eye should thrust a flaming brand.
The giant, with a scornful grin, replied,
Vain augur, thou hast falsely prophesied:
Already Love his flaming brand has tost;
Looking on two fair eyes, my sight I lost.—
Thus, warned in vain, with stalking pace he strode,
And stamped the margin of the briny flood
With heavy steps, and, weary, sought agen
The cool retirement of his gloomy den.
A promontory, sharpening by degrees,
Ends in a wedge, and overlooks the seas;
On either side, below, the water flows:
This airy walk the giant-lover chose;

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* *Simagres*, one of our author's Gallicisms, for affected contortions of the face.

Here on the midst he sate; his flocks, unled,
Their shepherd followed, and securely fed.
A pine so burly, and of length so vast,
That sailing ships required it for a mast,
He wielded for a staff, his steps to guide;
But laid it by, his whistle while he tried.
A hundred reeds, of a prodigious growth,
Scarce made a pipe proportioned to his mouth;
Which when he gave it wind, the rocks around,
And watery plains, the dreadful hiss resound.
I heard the ruffian shepherd rudely blow,
Where, in a hollow cave, I sat below.
On Acis' bosom I my head reclined;
And still preserve the poem in my mind.
O lovely Galatea, whiter far
Than falling snows, and rising lilies are;
More flowery than the meads, as crystal bright,
Erect as alders, and of equal height;
More wanton than a kid; more sleek thy skin,
Than orient shells, that on the shores are seen;
Than apples fairer, when the boughs they lade;
Pleasing, as winter suns, or summer shade;
More grateful to the sight than goodly plains,
And softer to the touch than down of swans,
Or curds new turned; and sweeter to the taste,
Than swelling grapes, that to the vintage haste;
More clear than ice, or running streams, that stray
Through garden plots, but ah! more swift than they.
Yet, Galatea, harder to be broke
Than bullocks, unreclaimed to bear the yoke,
And far more stubborn than the knotted oak;
Like sliding streams, impossible to hold,
Like them fallacious, like their fountains cold;
More warping than the willow, to decline
My warm embrace; more brittle than the vine;
Immoveable, and fixt in thy disdain;
Rough, as these rocks, and of a harder grain;

More violent than is the rising flood;
And the praised peacock is not half so proud;
Fierce as the fire, and sharp as thistles are,
And more outrageous than a mother bear;
Deaf as the billows to the vows I make,
And more revengeful than a trodden snake;
In swiftness fleeter than the flying hind,
Or driven tempests, or the driving wind.
All other faults with patience I can bear;
But swiftness is the vice I only fear.
Yet, if you knew me well, you would not shun
My love, but to my wished embraces run;
Would languish in your turn, and court my stay,
And much repent of your unwise delay.
My palace, in the living rock, is made
By nature's hand; a spacious pleasing shade,
Which neither heat can pierce, nor cold invade.
My garden filled with fruits you may behold,
And grapes in clusters, imitating gold;
Some blushing bunches of a purple hue;
And these, and those, are all reserved for you.
Red strawberries in shades expecting stand,
Proud to be gathered by so white a hand.
Autumnal cornels latter fruit provide,
And plumbs, to tempt you, turn their glossy side;
Not those of common kinds, but such alone,
As in Phæacian orchards might have grown.
Nor chesnuts shall be wanting to your food,
Nor garden-fruits, nor wildings of the wood.
The laden boughs for you alone shall bear,
And yours shall be the product of the year.
The flocks you see are all my own, beside
The rest that woods and winding vallies hide,
And those that folded in the caves abide.
Ask not the numbers of my growing store;
Who knows how many, knows he has no more.

Nor will I praise my cattle ; trust not me,
But judge yourself, and pass your own decree.
Behold their swelling dugs ; the sweepy weight
Of ewes, that sink beneath the milky freight;
In the warm folds their tender lambkins lie;
Apart from kids, that call with human cry.
New milk in nut-brown bowls is duly served
For daily drink, the rest for cheese reserved.
Nor are these household dainties all my store;
The fields and forests will afford us more ;
The deer, the hare, the goat, the savage boar.
All sorts of venison, and of birds the best;
A pair of turtles taken from the nest.
I walked the mountains, and two cubs* I found,
Whose dam had left them on the naked ground ;
So like, that no distinction could be seen;
So pretty, they were presents for a queen :
And so they shall ; I took them both away,
And keep, to be companions of your play.
Oh raise, fair nymph, your beauteous face above
The waves ; nor scorn my presents, and my love.
Come, Galatea, come, and view my face;
I late beheld it in the watery glass,
And found it lovelier than I feared it was.
Survey my towering stature, and my size :
Not Jove, the Jove you dream, that rules the skies,
Bears such a bulk, or is so largely spread.
My locks (the plenteous harvest of my head,)
Hang o'er my manly face, and dangling down,
As with a shady grove, my shoulders crown.
Nor think, because my limbs and body bear
A thick-set underwood of bristling hair,

* The word *bear-cubs* is wanting, to complete the sense of Ovid :

" Villosæ catulos ursæ."

My shape deformed; what fouler sight can be,
Than the bald branches of a leafless tree?
Foul is the steed without a flowing mane;
And birds, without their feathers, and their train:
Wool decks the sheep; and man receives a grace
From bushy limbs, and from a bearded face.
My forehead with a single eye is filled,
Round as a ball, and ample as a shield.
The glorious lamp of heaven, the radiant sun,
Is Nature's eye; and she's content with one.
Add, that my father sways your seas, and I,
Like you, am of the watry family.
I make you his, in making you my own;
You I adore, and kneel to you alone;
Jove, with his fabled thunder, I despise,
And only fear the lightning of your eyes.
Frown not, fair nymph! yet I could bear to be
Disdained, if others were disdained with me.
But to repulse the Cyclops, and prefer
The love of Acis,—heavens! I cannot bear.
But let the stripling please himself; nay more,
Please you, though that's the thing I most abhor;
The boy shall find, if e'er we cope in fight,
These giant limbs endued with giant might.
His living bowels from his belly torn,
And scattered limbs, shall on the flood be borne,
Thy flood, ungrateful nymph; and fate shall find
That way for thee and Acis to be joined.
For oh! I burn with love, and thy disdain
Augments at once my passion, and my pain.
Translated Ætna flames within my heart,
And thou, inhuman, wilt not ease my smart.—
Lamenting thus in vain, he rose, and strode
With furious paces to the neigbouring wood;
Restless his feet, distracted was his walk,
Mad were his motions, and confused his talk;

Mad as the vanquished bull, when forced to yield
His lovely mistress, and forsake the field.
Thus far unseen I saw; when, fatal chance
His looks directing, with a sudden glance,
Acis and I were to his sight betrayed;
Where, nought suspecting, we securely played.
From his wide mouth a bellowing cry he cast,—
I see, I see, but this shall be your last.—
A roar so loud made Ætna to rebound,
And all the Cyclops laboured in the sound.
Affrighted with his monstrous voice, I fled,
And in the neighbouring ocean plunged my head.
Poor Acis turned his back, and, Help, he cried,
Help, Galatea! help, my parent Gods,
And take me, dying, to your deep abodes!—
The Cyclops followed; but he sent before
A rib, which from the living rock he tore;
Though but an angle reached him of the stone,
The mighty fragment was enough alone,
To crush all Acis; 'twas too late to save,
But what the fates allowed to give, I gave;
That Acis to his lineage should return,
And roll among the river Gods his urn.
Straight issued from the stone a stream of blood,
Which lost the purple, mingling with the flood;
Then like a troubled torrent it appeared;
The torrent too, in little space, was cleared;
The stone was cleft, and through the yawning chink
New reeds arose, on the new river's brink.
The rock, from out its hollow womb, disclosed
A sound like water in its course opposed:
When (wonderous to behold!) full in the flood,
Up starts a youth, and navel-high he stood.
Horns from his temples rise; and either horn
Thick wreaths of reeds (his native growth) adorn.
Were not his stature taller than before,
His bulk augmented, and his beauty more,

His colour blue, for Acis he might pass ;
And Acis, changed into a stream, he was.
But, mine no more, he rolls along the plains
With rapid motion, and his name retains.

OF THE

PYTHAGOREAN PHILOSOPHY.

FROM THE FIFTEENTH BOOK OF

OVID'S METAMORPHOSES.

The fourteenth book concludes with the death and deification of Romulus; the fifteenth begins with the election of Numa to the crown of Rome. On this occasion, Ovid, following the opinion of some authors, makes Numa the scholar of Pythagoras, and to have begun his acquaintance with that philosopher at Crotona, a town in Italy; from thence he makes a digression to the moral and natural philosophy of Pythagoras; on both which our author enlarges; and which are the most learned and beautiful parts of the Metamorphoses.

A KING is sought to guide the growing state,
One able to support the public weight,
And fill the throne where Romulus had sate.
Renown, which oft bespeaks the public voice,
Had recommended Numa to their choice;
A peaceful, pious prince; who, not content
To know the Sabine rites, his study bent
To cultivate his mind; to learn the laws
Of nature, and explore their hidden cause.

Urged by this care, his country he forsook,
And to Crotona thence his journey took.
Arrived, he first enquired the founder's name
Of this new colony; and whence he came.
Then thus a senior of the place replies,
Well read, and curious of antiquities.—
'Tis said, Alcides hither took his way
From Spain, and drove along his conquered prey;
Then, leaving in the fields his grazing cows,
He sought himself some hospitable house.
Good Croton entertained his godlike guest;
While he repaired his weary limbs with rest.
The hero, thence departing, blessed the place;
And here, he said, in time's revolving race,
A rising town shall take its name from thee.—
Revolving time fulfilled the prophecy;
For Myscelos, the justest man on earth,
Alemon's son, at Argos had his birth;
Him Hercules, armed with his club of oak,
O'ershadowed in a dream, and thus bespoke;
Go, leave thy native soil, and make abode
Where Æsaris rolls down his rapid flood;—
He said; and sleep forsook him, and the God.
Trembling he waked, and rose with anxious heart;
His country laws forbad him to depart,
What should he do? 'Twas death to go away,
And the God menaced if he dared to stay.
All day he doubted, and, when night came on,
Sleep, and the same forewarning dream, begun;
Once more the God stood threatening o'er his head,
With added curses if he disobeyed.
Twice warned, he studied flight; but would convey,
At once, his person and his wealth away.
Thus while he lingered, his design was heard;
A speedy process formed, and death declared.
Witness there needed none of his offence,
Against himself the wretch was evidence;

Condemned, and destitute of human aid,
To him, for whom he suffered, thus he prayed.
O Power, who hast deserved in heaven a throne,
Not given, but by thy labours made thy own,
Pity thy suppliant, and protect his cause,
Whom thou hast made obnoxious to the laws!—
A custom was of old, and still remains,
Which life or death by suffrages ordains;
White stones and black within an urn are cast,
The first absolve, but fate is in the last.
The judges to the common urn bequeath
Their votes, and drop the sable signs of death:
The box receives all black; but, poured from thence,
The stones came candid forth, the hue of innocence.
Thus Alimonides his safety won,
Preserved from death by Alcumena's son.
Then to his kinsman God his vows he pays,
And cuts with prosperous gales the Ionian seas;
He leaves Tarentum, favoured by the wind,
And Thurine bays, and Temises, behind;
Soft Sibaris, and all the capes that stand
Along the shore, he makes in sight of land;
Still doubling, and still coasting, till he found
The mouth of Æsaris, and promised ground;
Then saw where, on the margin of the flood,
The tomb that held the bones of Croton stood;
Here, by the God's command, he built and walled
The place predicted, and Crotona called.
Thus fame, from time to time, delivers down
The sure tradition of the Italian town.
Here dwelt the man divine whom Samos bore,
But now self banished from his native shore,
Because he hated tyrants, nor could bear
The chains which none but servile souls will wear.
He, though from heaven remote, to heaven could move,
With strength of mind, and tread the abyss above;

And penetrate, with his interior light,
Those upper depths, which Nature hid from sight;
And what he had observed, and learnt from thence,
Loved in familiar language to dispense.
The crowd with silent admiration stand,
And heard him, as they heard their god's command;
While he discoursed of heaven's mysterious laws,
The world's original, and nature's cause;
And what was God, and why the fleecy snows
In silence fell, and rattling winds arose;
What shook the stedfast earth, and whence begun
The dance of planets round the radiant sun;
If thunder was the voice of angry Jove,
Or clouds, with nitre pregnant, burst above;
Of these, and things beyond the common reach,
He spoke, and charmed his audience with his speech.
He first the taste of flesh from tables drove,
And argued well, if arguments could move.—
O mortals! from your fellows' blood abstain,
Nor taint your bodies with a food profane;
While corn and pulse by nature are bestowed,
And planted orchards bend their willing load;
While laboured gardens wholsome herbs produce,
And teeming vines afford their generous juice;
Nor tardier fruits of cruder kind are lost,
But tamed with fire, or mellowed by the frost;
While kine to pails distended udders bring,
And bees their honey, redolent of spring;
While earth not only can your needs supply,
But, lavish of her store, provides for luxury;
A guiltless feast administers with ease,
And without blood is prodigal to please.
Wild beasts their maws with their slain brethren fill,
And yet not all, for some refuse to kill;
Sheep, goats, and oxen, and the nobler steed,
On browz, and corn, the flowery meadows feed.

Bears, tigers, wolves, the lion's angry brood,
Whom heaven endued with principles of blood,
He wisely sundered from the rest, to yell
In forests, and in lonely caves to dwell,
Where stronger beasts oppress the weak by might,
And all in prey and purple feasts delight.
O impious use! to Nature's laws opposed,
Where bowels are in other bowels closed;
Where, fattened by their fellows' fat, they thrive;
Maintained by murder, and by death they live.
'Tis then for nought that mother earth provides
The stores of all she shows, and all she hides,
If men with fleshly morsels must be fed,
And chew with bloody teeth the breathing bread.
What else is this but to devour our guests,
And barbarously renew Cyclopean feasts!
We, by destroying life, our life sustain,
And gorge the ungodly maw with meats obscene.
Not so the golden age, who fed on fruit,
Nor durst with bloody meals their mouths pollute.
Then birds in airy space might safely move,
And timorous hares on heaths securely rove;
Nor needed fish the guileful hooks to fear,
For all was peaceful, and that peace sincere.
Whoever was the wretch (and cursed be he!)
That envied first our food's simplicity,
The essay of bloody feasts on brutes began,
And, after, forged the sword to murder man.
Had he the sharpened steel alone employed
On beasts of prey, that other beasts destroyed,
Or men invaded with their fangs and paws,
This had been justified by Nature's laws,
And self-defence; but who did feasts begin
Of flesh, he stretched necessity to sin.
To kill man-killers man has lawful power,
But not the extended licence, to devour.

Ill habits gather by unseen degrees,
As brooks make rivers, rivers run to seas.
The sow, with her broad snout for rooting up
The intrusted seed, was judged to spoil the crop,
And intercept the sweating farmer's hope;
The covetous churl, of unforgiving kind,
The offender to the bloody priest resigned:
Her hunger was no plea; for that she died.
The goat came next in order, to be tried:
The goat had cropt the tendrils of the vine;
In vengeance laity and clergy join,
Where one had lost his profit, one his wine.
Here was, at least, some shadow of offence;
The sheep was sacrificed on no pretence,
But meek and unresisting innocence.
A patient, useful creature, born to bear
The warm and woolly fleece, that cloathed her murderer,
And daily to give down the milk she bred,
A tribute for the grass on which she fed.
Living, both food and raiment she supplies,
And is of least advantage when she dies.
How did the toiling ox his death deserve,
A downright simple drudge, and born to serve?
O tyrant! with what justice canst thou hope
The promise of the year, a plenteous crop,
When thou destroyest thy labouring steer, who tilled,
And plowed, with pains, thy else ungrateful field?
From his yet reeking neck to draw the yoke,
(That neck with which the surly clods he broke,)
And to the hatchet yield thy husbandman,
Who finished autumn, and the spring began!
Nor this alone; but, heaven itself to bribe,
We to the gods our impious acts ascribe;
First recompense with death their creatures' toil,
Then call the blessed above to share the spoil:

The fairest victim must the powers appease;
So fatal 'tis, sometimes, too much to please!
A purple fillet his broad brows adorns,
With flowery garlands crowned, and gilded horns;
He hears the murderous prayer the priest prefers,
But understands not, 'tis his doom he hears;
Beholds the meal betwixt his temples cast,
The fruit and product of his labours past;
And in the water views, perhaps, the knife
Uplifted, to deprive him of his life;
Then, broken up alive, his entrails sees
Torn out, for priests to inspect the gods' decrees.
From whence, O mortal men, this gust of blood
Have you derived, and interdicted food?
Be taught by me this dire delight to shun,
Warned by my precepts, by my practice won;
And when you eat the well-deserving beast,
Think, on the labourer of your field you feast!
Now since the God inspires me to proceed,
Be that whate'er inspiring Power obeyed.
For I will sing of mighty mysteries,
Of truths concealed before from human eyes,
Dark oracles unveil, and open all the skies.
Pleased as I am to walk along the sphere
Of shining stars, and travel with the year,
To leave the heavy earth, and scale the height
Of Atlas, who supports the heavenly weight;
To look from upper light, and thence survey
Mistaken mortals wandering from the way,
And, wanting wisdom, fearful for the state
Of future things, and trembling at their fate!
Those I would teach; and by right reason bring
To think of death, as but an idle thing.
Why thus affrighted at an empty name,
A dream of darkness, and fictitious flame?
Vain themes of wit, which but in poems pass,
And fables of a world, that never was!

What feels the body when the soul expires,
By time corrupted, or consumed by fires?
Nor dies the spirit, but new life repeats
In other forms, and only changes seats.
Even I, who these mysterious truths declare,
Was once Euphorbus in the Trojan war;
My name and lineage I remember well,
And how in fight by Sparta's king I fell.
In Argive Juno's fane I late beheld
My buckler hung on high, and owned my former shield.
Then death, so called, is but old matter dressed
In some new figure, and a varied vest;
Thus all things are but altered, nothing dies,
And here and there the unbodied spirit flies,
By time, or force, or sickness dispossest,
And lodges, where it lights, in man or beast;
Or hunts without, till ready limbs it find,
And actuates those according to their kind;
From tenement to tenement is tossed;
The soul is still the same, the figure only lost:
And as the softened wax new seals receives,
This face assumes, and that impression leaves;
Now called by one, now by another name,
The form is only changed, the wax is still the same:
So death, so called, can but the form deface;
The immortal soul flies out in empty space,
To seek her fortune in some other place.
Then let not piety be put to flight,
To please the taste of glutton appetite;
But suffer inmate souls secure to dwell,
Lest from their seats your parents you expel;
With rabid hunger feed upon your kind,
Or from a beast dislodge a brother's mind.
And since, like Tiphys, parting from the shore,
In ample seas I sail, and depths untried before,

This let me further add, that nature knows
No stedfast station, but, or ebbs, or flows;
Ever in motion, she destroys her old,
And casts new figures in another mould.
Even times are in perpetual flux, and run,
Like rivers from their fountain, rolling on.
For time, no more than streams, is at a stay;
The flying hour is ever on her way;
And as the fountain still supplies her store,
The wave behind impels the wave before,
Thus in successive course the minutes run,
And urge their predecessor minutes on,
Still moving, ever new; for former things
Are set aside, like abdicated kings;
And every moment alters what is done,
And innovates some act till then unknown.
Darkness, we see, emerges into light,
And shining suns descend to sable night;
Even heaven itself receives another die,
When wearied animals in slumbers lie
Of midnight ease; another, when the gray
Of morn preludes the splendour of the day.
The disk of Phœbus, when he climbs on high,
Appears at first but as a bloodshot eye;
And when his chariot downward drives to bed,
His ball is with the same suffusion red;
But, mounted high in his meridian race,
All bright he shines, and with a better face;
For there, pure particles of æther flow,
Far from the infection of the world below.
Nor equal light the unequal moon adorns,
Or in her wexing, or her waning horns;
For, every day she wanes, her face is less,
But, gathering into globe, she fattens at increase.
Perceiv'st thou not the process of the year,
How the four seasons in four forms appear,
Resembling human life in every shape they wear?

Spring first, like infancy, shoots out her head,
With milky juice requiring to be fed;
Helpless, though fresh, and wanting to be led.
The green stem grows in stature and in size,
But only feeds with hope the farmer's eyes;
Then laughs the childish year, with flowerets crowned,
And lavishly perfumes the fields around;
But no substantial nourishment receives,
Infirm the stalks, unsolid are the leaves.
Proceeding onward whence the year began,
The Summer grows adult, and ripens into man.
This season, as in men, is most replete
With kindly moisture, and prolific heat.
Autumn succeeds, a sober tepid age,
Not froze with fear, nor boiling into rage;
More than mature, and tending to decay,
When our brown locks repine to mix with odious grey.
Last, Winter creeps along with tardy pace;
Sour is his front, and furrowed is his face.
His scalp if not dishonoured quite of hair,
The ragged fleece is thin, and thin is worse than bare.
Even our own bodies daily change receive;
Some part of what was theirs before, they leave,
Nor are to-day what yesterday they were;
Nor the whole same to-morrow will appear.
Time was, when we were sowed, and just began,
From some few fruitful drops, the promise of a man;
Then Nature's hand (fermented as it was)
Moulded to shape the soft, coagulated mass;
And when the little man was fully formed,
The breathless embryo with a spirit warmed;
But when the mother's throes begin to come,
The creature, pent within the narrow room,
Breaks his blind prison, pushing to repair
His stifled breath, and draw the living air;
Cast on the margin of the world he lies,
A helpless babe, but by instinct he cries,

He next essays to walk, but, downward pressed,
On four feet imitates his brother beast:
By slow degrees he gathers from the ground
His legs, and to the rolling chair is bound;
Then walks alone: a horseman now become,
He rides a stick, and travels round the room:
In time he vaunts among his youthful peers,
Strong-boned, and strung with nerves, in pride of years:
He runs with mettle his first merry stage,
Maintains the next, abated of his rage,
But manages his strength, and spares his age.
Heavy the third, and stiff, he sinks apace,
And, though 'tis down-hill all, but creeps along the race.
Now sapless on the verge of death he stands,
Contemplating his former feet, and hands;
And, Milo-like, his slackened sinews sees,
And withered arms, once fit to cope with Hercules,
Unable now to shake, much less to tear, the trees.
So Helen wept, when her too faithful glass
Reflected to her eyes the ruins of her face;
Wondering what charms her ravishers could spy,
To force her twice, or even but once enjoy!
Thy teeth, devouring time, thine, envious age,
On things below still exercise your rage;
With venomed grinders you corrupt your meat,
And then, at lingering meals, the morsels eat.
Nor those, which elements we call, abide,
Nor to this figure, nor to that, are tied;
For this eternal world is said of old
But four prolific principles to hold,
Four different bodies; two to heaven ascend,
And other two down to the centre tend.
Fire, first, with wings expanded mounts on high,
Pure, void of weight, and dwells in upper sky;
Then Air, because unclogged in empty space,
Flies after fire, and claims the second place;

But weighty Water, as her nature guides,
Lies on the lap of Earth; and mother Earth subsides.
All things are mixt with these, which all contain,
And into these are all resolved again.
Earth rarifies to dew; expanded more,
The subtle dew in air begins to soar,
Spreads as she flies, and, weary of her name,
Extenuates still, and changes into flame;
Thus having by degrees perfection won,
Restless, they soon untwist the web they spun;
And fire begins to lose her radiant hue,
Mixed with gross air, and air descends to dew;
And dew, condensing, does her form forego,
And sinks, a heavy lump of earth, below.
Thus are their figures never at a stand,
But changed by Nature's innovating hand;
All things are altered, nothing is destroyed,
The shifted scene for some new show employed.
Then, to be born, is to begin to be
Some other thing we were not formerly;
And what we call to die, is not to appear,
Or be the thing that formerly we were.
Those very elements, which we partake
Alive, when dead, some other bodies make;
Translated grow, have sense, or can discourse;
But death on deathless substance has no force.
That forms are changed I grant, that nothing can
Continue in the figure it began:
The golden age to silver was debased;
To copper that; our metal came at last.
The face of places, and their forms, decay,
And that is solid earth, that once was sea;
Seas, in their turn, retreating from the shore,
Make solid land what ocean was before;
And far from strands are shells of fishes found,
And rusty anchors fixed on mountain ground;

And what were fields before, now washed and worn
By falling floods from high, to valleys turn,
And, crumbling still, descend to level lands;
And lakes, and trembling bogs, are barren sands;
And the parched desart floats in streams unknown,
Wondering to drink of waters not her own.
Here nature living fountains opes; and there
Seals up the wombs where living fountains were;
Or earthquakes stop their ancient course, and bring
Diverted streams to feed a distant spring.
So Lycus, swallowed up, is seen no more,
But, far from thence, knocks out another door.
Thus Erasinus dives; and blind in earth
Runs on, and gropes his way to second birth,
Starts up in Argos meads, and shakes his locks
Around the fields, and fattens all the flocks.
So Mysus by another way is led,
And, grown a river, now disdains his head;
Forgets his humble birth, his name forsakes,
And the proud title of Caicus takes.
Large Amenane, impure with yellow sands,
Runs rapid often, and as often stands;
And here he threats the drunken fields to drown,
And there his dugs deny to give their liquor down.
Anigros once did wholesome draughts afford,
But now his deadly waters are abhorred;
Since, hurt by Hercules, as fame resounds,
The Centaur * in his current washed his wounds.
The streams of Hypanis are sweet no more,
But, brackish, lose their taste they had before.
Antissa, Pharos, Tyre, in seas were pent,
Once isles, but now increase the continent;
While the Leucadian coast, main-land before,
By rushing seas is severed from the shore.

* Nessus, mortally wounded by Hercules with a poisoned arrow.

So Zancle to the Italian earth was tied,
And men once walked where ships at anchor ride;
Till Neptune overlooked the narrow way,
And in disdain poured in the conquering sea.
Two cities that adorned the Achaian ground,
Buris and Helice, no more are found,
But, whelmed beneath a lake, are sunk and drowned;
And boatmen through the crystal water show,
To wondering passengers, the walls below.
Near Træzen stands a hill, exposed in air
To winter winds, of leafy shadows bare:
This once was level ground; but (strange to tell)
The included vapours, that in caverns dwell,
Labouring with cholic pangs, and close confined,
In vain sought issue from the rumbling wind;
Yet still they heaved for vent, and, heaving still,
Enlarged the concave, and shot up the hill;
As breath extends a bladder, or the skins
Of goats are blown to inclose the hoarded wines.
The mountain yet retains a mountain's face,
And gathered rubbish heals the hollow space.
Of many wonders, which I heard or knew,
Retrenching most, I will relate but few.
What, are not springs with qualities opposed
Endued at seasons, and at seasons lost?
Thrice in a day, thine, Ammon, change their form,
Cold at high noon, at morn and evening warm;
Thine, Athaman, will kindle wood, if thrown
On the piled earth, and in the waning moon.
The Thracians have a stream, if any try
The taste, his hardened bowels petrify;
Whate'er it touches it converts to stones,
And makes a marble pavement where it runs.
Grathis, and Sibaris her sister flood,
That slide through our Calabrian neighbour wood,
With gold and amber die the shining hair,
And thither youth resort; for who would not be fair?

But stranger virtues yet in streams we find;
Some change not only bodies, but the mind.
Who has not heard of Salmacis obscene,
Whose waters into women soften men?
Of Æthiopian lakes, which turn the brain
To madness, or in heavy sleep constrain?
Clytorean streams the love of wine expel,
(Such is the virtue of the abstemious well,)
Whether the colder nymph, that rules the flood,
Extinguishes, and baulks the drunken God;
Or that Melampus (so have some assured)
When the mad Prœtides with charms he cured,
And powerful herbs, both charms and simples cast
Into the sober spring, where still their virtues last.
Unlike effects Lyncestis will produce;
Who drinks his waters, though with moderate use,
Reels as with wine, and sees with double sight,
His heels too heavy, and his head too light.
Ladon, once Pheneos, an Arcadian stream,
(Ambiguous in the effects, as in the name,)
By day is wholesome beverage; but is thought
By night infected, and a deadly draught.
Thus running rivers, and the standing lake,
Now of these virtues, now of those partake.
Time was (and all things time and fate obey)
When fast Ortygia floated on the sea;
Such were Cyanean isles, when Typhis steered
Betwixt their straits, and their collision feared;
They swam where now they sit; and, firmly joined,
Secure of rooting up, resist the wind.
Nor Ætna, vomiting sulphureous fire,
Will ever belch; for sulphur will expire,
The veins exhausted of the liquid store;
Time was she cast no flames; in time will cast no more.
For, whether earth's an animal, and air
Imbibes, her lungs with coolness to repair,

And what she sucks remits, she still requires
Inlets for air, and outlets for her fires;
When tortured with convulsive fits she shakes,
That motion chokes the vent, till other vent she makes;
Or when the winds in hollow caves are closed,
And subtile spirits find that way opposed,
They toss up flints in air; the flints that hide
The seeds of fire, thus tossed in air, collide,
Kindling the sulphur, till, the fuel spent,
The cave is cooled, and the fierce winds relent.
Or whether sulphur, catching fire, feeds on
Its unctuous parts, till, all the matter gone,
The flames no more ascend; for earth supplies
The fat that feeds them; and when earth denies
That food, by length of time consumed, the fire,
Famished for want of fuel, must expire.

A race of men there are, as fame has told,
Who, shivering, suffer Hyperborean cold,
Till, nine times bathing in Minerva's lake,
Soft feathers to defend their naked sides they take.
'Tis said, the Scythian wives (believe who will)
Transform themselves to birds by magic skill;
Smeared over with an oil of wonderous might,
That adds new pinions to their airy flight.

But this by sure experiment we know,
That living creatures from corruption grow:
Hide in a hollow pit a slaughtered steer,
Bees from his putrid bowels will appear;
Who, like their parents, haunt the fields, and bring
Their honey-harvest home, and hope another spring.
The warlike steed is multiplied, we find,
To wasps and hornets of the warrior kind.
Cut from a crab his crooked claws, and hide
The rest in earth, a scorpion thence will glide,

And shoot his sting; his tail, in circles tossed,
Refers* the limbs his backward father lost;
And worms, that stretch on leaves their filmy loom,
Crawl from their bags, and butterflies become.
Even slime begets the frogs' loquacious race;
Short of their feet at first, in little space
With arms and legs endued, long leaps they take,
Raised on their hinder part, and swim the lake,
And waves repel: for nature gives their kind,
To that intent, a length of legs behind.

The cubs of bears a living lump appear,
When whelped, and no determined figure wear.
Their mother licks them into shape, and gives
As much of form, as she herself receives.

The grubs from their sexangular abode
Crawl out unfinished, like the maggots' brood,
Trunks without limbs; till time at leisure brings
The thighs they wanted, and their tardy wings.

The bird who draws the car of Juno, vain
Of her crowned head, and of her starry train;
And he that bears the artillery of Jove,
The strong-pounced eagle, and the billing dove,
And all the feathered kind;—who could suppose
(But that from sight, the surest sense, he knows)
They from the included yolk, not ambient white,
arose?

There are who think the marrow of a man,
Which in the spine, while he was living, ran;
When dead, the pith corrupted, will become
A snake, and hiss within the hollow tomb.

All these receive their birth from other things.
But from himself the phœnix only springs:
Self-born, begotten by the parent flame
In which he burned, another and the same:

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* A latinism, for restores, or presents anew.

Who not by corn or herbs his life sustains,
But the sweet essence of Amomum drains;
And watches the rich gums Arabia bears,
While yet in tender dew they drop their tears.
He, (his five centuries of life fulfilled)
His nest on oaken boughs begins to build,
Or trembling tops of palm: and first he draws
The plan with his broad bill, and crooked claws,
Nature's artificers; on this the pile
Is formed, and rises round; then with the spoil
Of Casia, Cynamon, and stems of Nard,
(For softness strewed beneath,) his funeral bed is reared,
Funeral and bridal both; and all around
The borders with corruptless myrrh are crowned:
On this incumbent, till ætherial flame
First catches, then consumes, the costly frame;
Consumes him too, as on the pile he lies;
He lived on odours, and in odours dies.
An infant-phœnix from the former springs,
His father's heir, and from his tender wings
Shakes off his parent dust; his method he pursues,
And the same lease of life on the same terms renews.
When, grown to manhood, he begins his reign,
And with stiff pinions can his flight sustain,
He lightens of its load the tree that bore
His father's royal sepulchre before,
And his own cradle; this with pious care
Placed on his back, he cuts the buxom air,
Seeks the sun's city, and his sacred church,
And decently lays down his burden in the porch.
A wonder more amazing would we find?
The Hyæna shews it, of a double kind,
Varying the sexes in alternate years,
In one begets, and in another bears.
The thin cameleon, fed with air, receives
The colour of the thing to which he cleaves.

India, when conquered, on the conquering God
For planted vines the sharp-eyed lynx bestowed,
Whose urine, shed before it touches earth,
Congeals in air, and gives to gems their birth.
So coral, soft and white in ocean's bed,
Comes hardened up in air, and glows with red.
All changing species should my song recite,
Before I ceased, would change the day to night.
Nations and empires flourish and decay,
By turns command, and in their turns obey;
Time softens hardy people, time again
Hardens to war a soft, unwarlike train.
Thus Troy for ten long years her foes withstood,
And daily bleeding bore the expence of blood;
Now for thick streets it shows an empty space,
Or only filled with tombs of her own perished race;
Herself becomes the sepulchre of what she was.
Mycene, Sparta, Thebes of mighty fame,
Are vanished out of substance into name,
And Dardan Rome, that just begins to rise
On Tiber's banks, in time shall mate the skies;
Widening her bounds, and working on her way,
Even now she meditates imperial sway:
Yet this is change, but she by changing thrives,
Like moons new born, and in her cradle strives
To fill her infant-horns; an hour shall come,
When the round world shall be contained in Rome.
For thus old saws foretel, and Helenus
Anchises' drooping son enlivened thus,
When Ilium now was in a sinking state,
And he was doubtful of his future fate.
O goddess born, with thy hard fortune strive,
Troy never can be lost, and thou alive;
Thy passage thou shalt free through fire and sword,
And Troy in foreign lands shall be restored.

In happier fields a rising town I see,
Greater than what e'er was, or is, or e'er shall be;
And heaven yet owes the world a race derived from thee.
Sages and chiefs, of other lineage born,
The city shall extend, extended shall adorn;
But from Iulus he must draw his birth,
By whom thy Rome shall rule the conquered earth;
Whom heaven will lend mankind on earth to reign,
And late require the precious pledge again.—
This Helenus to great Æneas told,
Which I retain, e'er since in other mould
My soul was clothed; and now rejoice to view
My country walls rebuilt, and Troy revived anew;
Raised by the fall; decreed by loss to gain;
Enslaved but to be free, and conquered but to reign.
'Tis time my hard-mouthed coursers to controul,
Apt to run riot, and transgress the goal,
And therefore I conclude: whatever lies
In earth, or flits in air, or fills the skies,
All suffer change; and we, that are of soul
And body mixed, are members of the whole.
Then when our sires, or grandsires, shall forsake
The forms of men, and brutal figures take,
Thus housed, securely let their spirits rest,
Nor violate thy father in the beast,
Thy friend, thy brother, any of thy kin;
If none of these, yet there's a man within.
O spare to make a Thyestean meal,
To inclose his body, and his soul expel.
Ill customs by degrees to habits rise,
Ill habits soon become exalted vice:
What more advance can mortals make in sin,
So near perfection, who with blood begin?
Deaf to the calf that lies beneath the knife,
Looks up, and from her butcher begs her life;

Deaf to the harmless kid, that, ere he dies,
All methods to procure thy mercy tries,
And imitates in vain thy children's cries.
Where will he stop, who feeds with household bread,
Then eats the poultry, which before he fed?
Let plough thy steers; that, when they lose their breath,
To nature, not to thee, they may impute their death.
Let goats for food their loaded udders lend,
And sheep from winter-cold thy sides defend;
But neither springes, nets, nor snares employ,
And be no more ingenious to destroy.
Free as in air, let birds on earth remain,
Nor let insidious glue their wings constrain;
Nor opening hounds the trembling stag affright,
Nor purple feathers intercept his flight;
Nor hooks concealed in baits for fish prepare,
Nor lines to heave them twinkling up in air.
Take not away the life you cannot give;
For all things have an equal right to live.
Kill noxious creatures, where 'tis sin to save;
This only just prerogative we have:
But nourish life with vegetable food,
And shun the sacrilegious taste of blood.—
These precepts by the Samian sage were taught,
Which godlike Numa to the Sabines brought,
And thence transferred to Rome, by gift his own;
A willing people, and an offered throne.
O happy monarch, sent by heaven to bless
A savage nation with soft arts of peace;
To teach religion, rapine to restrain,
Give laws to lust, and sacrifice ordain:
Himself a saint, a goddess was his bride,
And all the muses o'er his acts preside.

TRANSLATIONS

FROM

OVID'S ART OF LOVE.

THE

FIRST BOOK

OF

OVID'S ART OF LOVE.

In Cupid's school whoe'er would take degree,
Must learn his rudiments, by reading me.
Seamen with sailing arts their vessels move;
Art guides the chariot, art instructs to love.
Of ships and chariots others know the rule;
But I am master in Love's mighty school.
Cupid indeed is obstinate and wild,
A stubborn god, but yet the god's a child;
Easy to govern in his tender age,
Like fierce Achilles in his pupillage:
That hero, born for conquest, trembling stood
Before the Centaur, and received the rod.
As Chiron mollified his cruel mind
With art, and taught his warlike hands to wind
The silver strings of his melodious lyre,
So Love's fair goddess does my soul inspire,

To teach her softer arts, to sooth the mind,
And smooth the rugged breasts of human kind.
Yet Cupid and Achilles, each with scorn
And rage were filled, and both were goddess-born.
The bull, reclaimed and yoked, the burden draws;
The horse receives the bitt within his jaws;
And stubborn Love shall bend beneath my sway,
Though struggling oft he strives to disobey.
He shakes his torch, he wounds me with his darts;
But vain his force, and vainer are his arts.
The more he burns my soul, or wounds my sight,
The more he teaches to revenge the spite.
I boast no aid the Delphian god affords,
Nor auspice from the flight of chattering birds;
Nor Clio, nor her sisters, have I seen,
As Hesiod saw them on the shady green:
Experience makes my work; a truth so tried
You may believe, and Venus be my guide.
Far hence, ye vestals, be, who bind your hair;
And wives, who gowns below your ancles wear.
I sing the brothels loose and unconfined,
The unpunishable pleasures of the kind;
Which all alike, for love, or money, find.
You, who in Cupid's rolls inscribe your name,
First seek an object worthy of your flame;
Then strive, with art, your lady's mind to gain;
And, last, provide your love may long remain.
On these three precepts all my works shall move;
These are the rules and principles of love.
Before your youth with marriage is opprest,
Make choice of one who suits your humour best;
And such a damsel drops not from the sky,
She must be sought for with a curious eye.
The wary angler, in the winding brook,
Knows what the fish, and where to bait his hook.
The fowler and the huntsman know by name
The certain haunts and harbour of their game.

So must the lover beat the likeliest grounds;
The assembly where his quarry most abounds.
Nor shall my novice wander far astray;
These rules shall put him in the ready way.
Thou shalt not sail around the continent,
As far as Perseus, or as Paris went;
For Rome alone affords thee such a store,
As all the world can hardly show thee more:
The face of heaven with fewer stars is crowned,
Than beauties in the Roman sphere are found.
Whether thy love is bent on blooming youth,
On dawning sweetness in unartful truth,
Or courts the juicy joys of riper growth;
Here may'st thou find thy full desires in both.
Or if autumnal beauties please thy sight,
(An age that knows to give, and take delight,)
Millions of matrons of the graver sort,
In common prudence, will not baulk the sport.
In summer heats thou need'st but only go
To Pompey's cool and shady portico;
Or Concord's fane; or that proud edifice,
Whose turrets near the bawdy suburb rise;
Or to that other portico, where stands
The cruel father urging his commands,
And fifty daughters wait the time of rest,
To plunge their poniards in the bridegroom's breast;
Or Venus' temple, where, on annual nights,
They mourn Adonis with Assyrian rites.
Nor shun the Jewish walk, where the foul drove,
On Sabbaths, rest from every thing but love:
Nor Isis' temple; for that sacred whore
Makes others what to Jove she was before.
And if the hall itself be not belied,
Even there the cause of love is often tried;
Near it at least, or in the palace-yard,
From whence the noisy combatants are heard.

The crafty counsellors, in formal gown,
There gain another's cause, but lose their own.
There eloquence is nonplust in the suit,
And lawyers, who had words at will, are mute.
Venus, from her adjoining temple, smiles,
To see them caught in their litigious wiles.
Grave senators lead home the youthful dame,
Returning clients, when they patrons came.
But, above all, the play-house is the place;
There's choice of quarry in that narrow chace.
There take thy stand, and, sharply looking out,
Soon may'st thou find a mistress in the rout,
For length of time, or for a single bout.
The theatres are berries for the fair,
Like ants on mole-hills thither they repair;
Like bees to hives, so numerously they throng,
It may be said, they to that place belong.
Thither they swarm, who have the public voice;
There choose, if plenty not distracts thy choice.
To see, and to be seen, in heaps they run;
Some to undo, and some to be undone.
From Romulus the rise of plays began,
To his new subjects a commodious man;
Who, his unmarried soldiers to supply,
Took care the commonwealth should multiply;
Providing Sabine women for his braves,
Like a true king, to get a race of slaves.
His play-house not of Parian marble made,
Nor was it spread with purple sails for shade;
The stage with rushes, or with leaves, they strewed,
No scenes in prospect, no machining god.
On rows of homely turf they sat to see,
Crowned with the wreaths of every common tree.
There, while they sat in rustic majesty,
Each lover had his mistress in his eye;
And whom he saw most suiting to his mind,
For joys of matrimonial rape designed.

Scarce could they wait the plaudit in their haste;
But, ere the dances and the song were past,
The monarch gave the signal from his throne,
And, rising, bade his merry men fall on.
The martial crew, like soldiers ready prest,
Just at the word, (the word too was, "The best,")
With joyful cries each other animate;
Some choose, and some at hazard seize their mate.
As doves from eagles, or from wolves the lambs,
So from their lawless lovers fly the dames.
Their fear was one, but not one face of fear;
Some rend the lovely tresses of their hair;
Some shriek, and some are struck with dumb despair.
Her absent mother one invokes in vain;
One stands amazed, not daring to complain;
The nimbler trust their feet, the slow remain.
But nought availing, all are captives led,
Trembling and blushing, to the genial bed.
She who too long resisted, or denied,
The lusty lover made by force a bride;
And, with superior strength, compelled her to his side.
Then soothed her thus:—My soul's far better part,
Cease weeping, nor afflict thy tender heart;
For what thy father to thy mother was,
That faith to thee, that solemn vow I pass.—
Thus Romulus became so popular;
This was the way to thrive in peace and war.
To pay his army, and fresh whores to bring,—
Who would not fight for such a gracious king?
Thus love in theatres did first improve,
And theatres are still the scenes of love.
Nor shun the chariot's, and the courser's race;
The circus is no inconvenient place.
No need is there of talking on the hand;
Nor nods, nor signs, which lovers understand:

But boldly next the fair your seat provide;
Close as you can to hers, and side by side.
Pleased or unpleased, no matter, crowding sit;
For so the laws of public shows permit.
Then find occasion to begin discourse;
Inquire, whose chariot this, and whose that horse?
To whatsoever side she is inclined,
Suit all your inclinations to her mind;
Like what she likes; from thence your court begin;
And whom she favours, wish that he may win.
But when the statues of the deities,
In chariots rolled, appear before the prize;
When Venus comes, with deep devotion rise.
If dust be on her lap, or grains of sand,
Brush both away with your officious hand;
If none be there, yet brush that nothing thence,
And still to touch her lap make some pretence.
Touch any thing of hers; and if her train
Sweep on the ground, let it not sweep in vain,
But gently take it up, and wipe it clean;
And while you wipe it, with observing eyes,
Who knows but you may see her naked thighs!
Observe, who sits behind her; and beware,
Lest his encroaching knee should press the fair.
Light service takes light minds; for some can tell
Of favours won, by laying cushions well:
By fanning faces, some their fortune meet;
And some by laying footstools for their feet.
These overtures of love the circus gives;
Nor at the sword-play less the lover thrives;
For there the son of Venus fights his prize,
And deepest wounds are oft received from eyes.
One, while the crowd their acclamations make,
Or while he bets, and puts his ring to stake,
Is struck from far, and feels the flying dart,
And of the spectacle is made a part.

Cæsar would represent a naval fight,
For his own honour, and for Rome's delight;
From either sea the youths and maidens come,
And all the world was then contained in Rome.
In this vast concourse, in this choice of game,
What Roman heart but felt a foreign flame?
Once more our prince prepares to make us glad;
And the remaining East to Rome will add.
Rejoice, ye Roman soldiers, in your urns;
Your ensigns from the Parthians shall return,
And the slain Crassi shall no longer mourn.
A youth is sent those trophies to demand,
And bears his father's thunder in his hand;
Doubt not the imperial boy in wars unseen,
In childhood all of Cæsar's race are men;
Celestial seeds shoot out before their day,
Prevent their years, and brook no dull delay:
Thus infant Hercules the snakes did press,
And in his cradle did his sire confess;
Bacchus, a boy, yet like a hero fought,
And early spoils from conquered India brought.
Thus you your father's troops shall lead to fight,
And thus shall vanquish in your father's right.
These rudiments you to your lineage owe;
Born to encrease your titles, as you grow.
Brethren you had, revenge your brethren slain;
You have a father, and his rights maintain;
Armed by your country's parent, and your own,
Redeem your country, and restore his throne.
Your enemies assert an impious cause;
You fight both for divine and human laws.
Already in their cause they are o'ercome;
Subject them too, by force of arms, to Rome.
Great father Mars with greater Cæsar join,
To give a prosperous omen to your line;
One of you is, and one shall be divine.

I prophesy you shall, you shall o'ercome;
My verse shall bring you back in triumph home.
Speak in my verse, exhort to loud alarms;
O were my numbers equal to your arms!
Then would I sing the Parthians' overthrow;
Their shot averse sent from a flying bow:
The Parthians, who already flying fight,
Already give an omen of their flight.
O when will come the day, by heaven designed,
When thou, the best and fairest of mankind,
Drawn by white horses shalt in triumph ride,
With conquered slaves attending on thy side;
Slaves, that no longer can be safe in flight;
O glorious object, O surprising sight,
O day of public joy, too good to end in night!
On such a day, if thou, and, next to thee,
Some beauty sits, the spectacle to see;
If she inquire the names of conquered kings,
Of mountains, rivers, and their hidden springs,
Answer to all thou knowest; and, if need be,
Of things unknown seem to speak knowingly.
This is Euphrates, crowned with reeds; and there
Flows the swift Tigris with his sea-green hair.
Invent new names of things unknown before;
Call this Armenia, that the Caspian shore;
Call this a Mede, and that a Parthian youth;
Talk probably, no matter for the truth.

In feasts, as at our shows, new means abound;
More pleasure there than that of wine is found.
The Paphian goddess there her ambush lays;
And Love betwixt the horns of Bacchus plays;
Desires increase at every swelling draught;
Brisk vapours add new vigour to the thought.
There Cupid's purple wings no flight afford,
But, wet with wine, he flutters on the board;
He shakes his pinions, but he cannot move;
Fixed he remains, and turns a maudlin love.

Wine warms the blood, and makes the spirits flow;
Care flies, and wrinkles from the forehead go;
Exalts the poor, invigorates the weak;
Gives mirth and laughter, and a rosy cheek.
Bold truths it speaks, and, spoken, dares maintain,
And brings our old simplicity again.
Love sparkles in the cup, and fills it higher;
Wine feeds the flames, and fuel adds to fire.
But choose no mistress in thy drunken fit;
Wine gilds too much their beauties and their wit.
Nor trust thy judgment when the tapers dance;
But sober, and by day, thy suit advance.
By day-light Paris judged the beauteous three,
And for the fairest did the prize decree.
Night is a cheat, and all deformities
Are hid, or lessened, in her dark disguise.
The sun's fair light each error will confess,
In face, in shape, in jewels, and in dress.

Why name I every place where youths abound?
'Tis loss of time, and a too fruitful ground.
The Baian baths, where ships at anchor ride,
And wholesome streams from sulphur fountains glide;
Where wounded youths are by experience taught,
The waters are less healthful than they thought;
Or Dian's fane, which near the suburb lies,
Where priests, for their promotion, fight a prize.
That maiden goddess is Love's mortal foe,
And much from her his subjects undergo.

Thus far the sportful Muse, with myrtle bound,
Has sung where lovely lasses may be found.
Now let me sing, how she, who wounds your mind,
With art, may be to cure your wounds inclined.
Young nobles, to my laws attention lend;
And all you, vulgar of my school, attend.

First then believe, all women may be won;
Attempt with confidence, the work is done.

The grashopper shall first forbear to sing
In summer season, or the birds in spring,
Than women can resist your flattering skill;
Even she will yield, who swears she never will.
To secret pleasure both the sexes move;
But women most, who most dissemble love.
'Twere best for us, if they would first declare,
Avow their passion, and submit to prayer.
The cow, by lowing, tells the bull her flame;
The neighing mare invites her stallion to the game.
Man is more temperate in his lust than they,
And more than women can his passion sway.
Biblis, we know, did first her love declare,
And had recourse to death in her despair.
Her brother she, her father Myrrha sought,
And loved, but loved not as a daughter ought.
Now from a tree she stills her odorous tears,
Which yet the name of her who shed them bears.
In Ida's shady vale a bull appeared,
White as the snow, the fairest of the herd;
A beauty-spot of black there only rose,
Betwixt his equal horns and ample brows;
The love and wish of all the Cretan cows.
The queen beheld him as his head he reared,
And envied every leap he gave the herd;
A secret fire she nourished in her breast,
And hated every heifer he caressed.
A story known, and known for true, I tell;
Nor Crete, though lying, can the truth conceal.
She cut him grass; (so much can Love command,)
She stroked, she fed him with her royal hand;
Was pleased in pastures with the herd to roam;
And Minos by the bull was overcome.
Cease, queen, with gems t'adorn thy beauteous brows;
The monarch of thy heart no jewel knows.

Nor in thy glass compose thy looks and eyes;
Secure from all thy charms thy lover lies:
Yet trust thy mirror, when it tells thee true;
Thou art no heifer to allure his view.
Soon would'st thou quit thy royal diadem
To thy fair rivals, to be horned like them.
If Minos please, no lover seek to find;
If not, at least seek one of human kind.
The wretched queen the Cretan court forsakes;
In woods and wilds her habitation makes:
She curses every beauteous cow she sees;
Ah, why dost thou my lord and master please!
And think'st, ungrateful creature as thou art,
With frisking awkwardly, to gain his heart!
She said, and straight commands, with frowning look,
To put her, undeserving, to the yoke;
Or feigns some holy rites of sacrifice,
And sees her rival's death with joyful eyes:
Then, when the bloody priest has done his part,
Pleased, in her hand she holds the beating heart;
Nor from a scornful taunt can scarce refrain;
Go, fool, and strive to please my love again.
Now she would be Europa, Io now;
(One bore a bull, and one was made a cow.)
Yet she at last her brutal bliss obtained,
And in a wooden cow the bull sustained;
Filled with his seed, accomplished her desire,
Till by his form the son betrayed the sire.*
If Atreus' wife to incest had not run,
(But, ah, how hard it is to love but one!)
His coursers Phœbus had not driven away,
To shun that sight, and interrupt the day.

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* The Minotaur.

Thy daughter, Nisus, † pulled thy purple hair,
And barking sea-dogs yet her bowels tear.
At sea and land Atrides saved his life,
Yet fell a prey to his adulterous wife.
Who knows not what revenge Medea sought,
When the slain offspring bore the father's fault?
Thus Phœnix did a woman's love bewail;
And thus Hippolytus by Phædra fell.
These crimes revengeful matrons did commit;
Hotter their lust, and sharper is their wit.
Doubt not from them an easy victory;
Scarce of a thousand dames will one deny.
All women are content that men should woo;
She who complains, and she who will not do.
Rest then secure, whate'er thy luck may prove,
Not to be hated for declaring love.
And yet how canst thou miss, since womankind
Is frail and vain, and still to change inclined?
Old husbands and stale gallants they despise;
And more another's, than their own, they prize.
A larger crop adorns our neighbour's field;
More milk his kine from swelling udders yield.
First gain the maid; by her thou shalt be sure
A free access and easy to procure:
Who knows what to her office does belong,
Is in the secret, and can hold her tongue,
Bribe her with gifts, with promises, and prayers;
For her good word goes far in love-affairs.
The time and fit occasion leave to her,
When she most aptly can thy suit prefer.
The time for maids to fire their lady's blood,
Is, when they find her in a merry mood.
When all things at her wish and pleasure move,
Her heart is open then, and free to love;
Then mirth and wantonness to lust betray,
And smooth the passage to the lover's way.

† Scylla.

Troy stood the siege, when filled with anxious care;
One merry fit concluded all the war.
If some fair rival vex her jealous mind,
Offer thy service to revenge in kind.
Instruct the damsel, while she combs her hair,
To raise the choler of that injured fair;
And, sighing, make her mistress understand,
She has the means of vengeance in her hand:
Then, naming thee, thy humble suit prefer,
And swear thou languishest and diest for her.
Then let her lose no time, but push at all;
For women soon are raised, and soon they fall.
Give their first fury leisure to relent,
They melt like ice, and suddenly repent.
To enjoy the maid, will that thy suit advance?
'Tis a hard question, and a doubtful chance.
One maid, corrupted, bawds the better for't;
Another for herself would keep the sport.
Thy business may be furthered or delayed;
But, by my counsel, let alone the maid;
Even though she should consent to do the feat,
The profit's little, and the danger great.
I will not lead thee through a rugged road,
But, where the way lies open, safe, and broad.
Yet if thou find'st her very much thy friend,
And her good face her diligence commend,
Let the fair mistress have thy first embrace,
And let the maid come after in her place.
But this I will advise, and mark my words;
For 'tis the best advice my skill affords:
If needs thou with the damsel wilt begin,
Before the attempt is made, make sure to win;
For then the secret better will be kept,
And she can tell no tales when once she's dipt.
'Tis for the fowler's interest to beware,
The bird entangled should not 'scape the snare.

The fish, once pricked, avoids the bearded hook,
And spoils the sport of all the neighbouring brook.
But if the wench be thine, she makes thy way,
And, for thy sake, her mistress will betray;
Tell all she knows, and all she hears her say.
Keep well the counsel of thy faithful spy;
So shalt thou learn whene'er she treads awry.
All things the stations of their seasons keep,
And certain times there are to sow and reap.
Ploughmen and sailors for the season stay,
One to plough land, and one to plough the sea;
So should the lover wait the lucky day.
Then stop thy suit, it hurts not thy design;
But think, another hour she may be thine.
And when she celebrates her birth at home,
Or when she views the public shows of Rome,
Know, all thy visits then are troublesome.
Defer thy work, and put not then to sea,
For that's a boding and a stormy day.
Else take thy time, and, when thou canst, begin;
To break a Jewish Sabbath, think no sin:
Nor even on superstitious days abstain;
Not when the Romans were at Allia slain.
Ill omens in her frowns are understood;
When she's in humour, every day is good.
But than her birth-day seldom comes a worse,
When bribes and presents must be sent of course;
And that's a bloody day, that costs thy purse.
Be staunch, yet parsimony will be vain;
The craving sex will still the lover drain.
No skill can shift them off, nor art remove;
They will be begging, when they know we love.
The merchant comes upon the appointed day,
Who shall before thy face his wares display;
To choose for her she craves thy kind advice;
Then begs again, to bargain for the price:

But when she has her purchase in her eye,
She hugs thee close, and kisses thee to buy :—
'Tis what I want, and 'tis a pen'orth too ;
In many years I will not trouble you.—
If you complain you have no ready coin ;
No matter, 'tis but writing of a line,
A little bill, not to be paid at sight ;
Now curse the time when thou wert taught to write !
She keeps her birth-day ; you must send the chear ;
And she'll be born a hundred times a year.
With daily lies she dribs thee into cost ;
That ear-ring dropt a stone, that ring is lost.
They often borrow what they never pay,
Whate'er you lend her, think it thrown away.
Had I ten mouths and tongues to tell each art,
All would be wearied ere I told a part.

By letters, not by words, thy love begin ;
And ford the dangerous passage with thy pen.
If to her heart thou aim'st to find the way,
Extremely flatter, and extremely pray.
Priam by prayers did Hector's body gain ;
Nor is an angry God invoked in vain.
With promised gifts her easy mind bewitch ;
For e'en the poor in promise may be rich.
Vain hopes awhile her appetite will stay,
'Tis a deceitful, but commodious way.
Who gives is mad ; but make her still believe
'Twill come, and that's the cheapest way to give.
E'en barren lands fair promises afford ;
But the lean harvest cheats the starving lord.
Buy not thy first enjoyment, lest it prove
Of bad example to thy future love :
But get it gratis, and she'll give thee more,
For fear of losing what she gave before.
The losing gamester shakes the box in vain,
And bleeds, and loses on, in hopes to gain.

Write then, and in thy letter, as I said,
Let her with mighty promises be fed.
Cydippe by a letter was betrayed,
Writ on an apple to the unwary maid.
She read herself into a marriage-vow;
(And every cheat in love the gods allow.)
Learn eloquence, ye noble youth of Rome;
It will not only at the bar o'ercome:
Sweet words the people and the senate move;
But the chief end of eloquence is love.
But in thy letter hide thy moving arts;
Affect not to be thought a man of parts.
None but vain fools to simple women preach;
A learned letter oft has made a breach.
In a familiar style your thoughts convey,
And write such things as present you would say;
Such words as from the heart may seem to move;
'Tis wit enough, to make her think you love.
If sealed she sends it back, and will not read,
Yet hope, in time, the business may succeed.
In time the steer will to the yoke submit;
In time the restive horse will bear the bitt;
Even the hard plough-share use will wear away,
And stubborn steel in length of time decay.
Water is soft, and marble hard; and yet
We see soft water through hard marble eat.
Though late, yet Troy at length in flames expired;
And ten years more Penelope had tired.
Perhaps thy lines unanswered she retained;
No matter, there's a point already gained;
For she, who reads, in time will answer too:
Things must be left by just degrees to grow.
Perhaps she writes, but answers with disdain,
And sharply bids you not to write again:
What she requires, she fears you should accord;
The jilt would not be taken at her word.

Mean time, if she be carried in her chair,
Approach, but do not seem to know she's there.
Speak softly, to delude the standers-by;
Or, if aloud, then speak ambiguously.
If sauntering in the portico she walk,
Move slowly too, for that's a time for talk;
And sometimes follow, sometimes be her guide,
But, when the crowd permits, go side by side.
Nor in the play-house let her sit alone;
For she's the play-house, and the play, in one.
There thou may'st ogle, or by signs advance
Thy suit, and seem to touch her hand by chance.
Admire the dancer who her liking gains,
And pity in the play the lover's pains:
For her sweet sake the loss of time despise;
Sit while she sits, and when she rises, rise.
But dress not like a fop, nor curl your hair,
Nor with a pumice make your body bare;
Leave those effeminate and useless toys
To eunuchs, who can give no solid joys.
Neglect becomes a man; thus Theseus found;
Uncurled, uncombed, the nymph his wishes crowned.
The rough Hippolytus was Phædra's care;
And Venus thought the rude Adonis fair.
Be not too finical; but yet be clean,
And wear well-fashioned clothes, like other men.
Let not your teeth be yellow, or be foul,
Nor in wide shoes your feet too loosely roll;
Of a black muzzle, and long beard, beware,
And let a skilful barber cut your hair;
Your nails be picked from filth, and even pared,
Nor let your nasty nostrils bud with beard;
Cure your unsavoury breath, gargle your throat,
And free your armpits from the ram and goat:
Dress not, in short, too little or too much;
And be not wholly French, nor wholly Dutch.

Now Bacchus calls me to his jolly rites;
Who would not follow, when a God invites?
He helps the poet, and his pen inspires,
Kind and indulgent to his former fires.
Fair Ariadne wandered on the shore,
Forsaken now, and Theseus loved no more:
Loose was her gown, dishevelled was her hair,
Her bosom naked, and her feet were bare;
Exclaiming, on the water's brink she stood;
Her briny tears augment the briny flood.
She shrieked, and wept, and both became her face;
No posture could that heavenly form disgrace.
She beat her breast: The traitor's gone, said she;
What shall become of poor forsaken me?
What shall become——she had not time for more,
The sounding cymbals rattled on the shore.
She swoons for fear, she falls upon the ground;
No vital heat was in her body found.
The Mimallonian dames about her stood,
And scudding satyrs ran before their God.
Silenus on his ass did next appear,
And held upon the mane; (the God was clear)
The drunken sire pursues, the dames retire;
Sometimes the drunken dames pursue the drunken sire.
At last he topples over on the plain;
The satyrs laugh, and bid him rise again.
And now the God of Wine came driving on,
High on his chariot by swift tygers drawn.
Her colour, voice, and sense, forsook the fair;
Thrice did her trembling feet for flight prepare,
And thrice, affrighted, did her flight forbear.
She shook, like leaves of corn when tempests blow,
Or slender reeds that in the marshes grow.
To whom the God:—Compose thy fearful mind;
In me a truer husband thou shalt find.

With heaven I will endow thee, and thy star
Shall with propitious light be seen afar,
And guide on seas the doubtful mariner.
He said, and from his chariot leaping light,
Lest the grim tygers should the nymph affright,
His brawny arms around her waist he threw;
(For Gods, whate'er they will, with ease can do;)
And swiftly bore her thence: the attending throng
Shout at the sight, and sing the nuptial song.
Now in full bowls her sorrow she may steep;
The bridegroom's liquor lays the bride asleep.
But thou, when flowing cups in triumph ride,
And the loved nymph is seated by thy side,
Invoke the God, and all the mighty Powers,
That wine may not defraud thy genial hours.
Then in ambiguous words thy suit prefer,
Which she may know were all addrest to her.
In liquid purple letters write her name,
Which she may read, and, reading, find the flame.
Then may your eyes confess your mutual fires;
(For eyes have tongues, and glances tell desires;)
Whene'er she drinks, be first to take the cup,
And, where she laid her lips, the blessing sup.
When she to carving does her hand advance,
Put out thy own, and touch it as by chance.
Thy service even her husband must attend:
(A husband is a most convenient friend.)
Seat the fool cuckold in the highest place,
And with thy garland his dull temples grace.
Whether below or equal in degree,
Let him be lord of all the company,
And what he says, be seconded by thee.
'Tis common to deceive through friendship's name;
But, common though it be, 'tis still to blame:
Thus factors frequently their trust betray,
And to themselves their masters' gains convey.

Drink to a certain pitch, and then give o'er;
Thy tongue and feet may stumble, drinking more.
Of drunken quarrels in her sight beware;
Pot-valour only serves to fright the fair.
Eurytion justly fell, by wine oppress,
For his rude riot at a wedding-feast.
Sing, if you have a voice; and show your parts
In dancing, if endued with dancing arts.
Do any thing within your power to please;
Nay, even affect a seeming drunkenness:
Clip every word; and if by chance you speak
Too home, or if too broad a jest you break,
In your excuse the company will join,
And lay the fault upon the force of wine.
True drunkenness is subject to offend;
But when 'tis feigned, 'tis oft a lover's friend.
Then safely you may praise her beauteous face,
And call him happy, who is in her grace.
Her husband thinks himself the man designed;
But curse the cuckold in your secret mind.
When all are risen, and prepare to go,
Mix with the crowd, and tread upon her toe.
This is the proper time to make thy court;
For now she's in the vein, and fit for sport.
Lay bashfulness, that rustic virtue, by;
To manly confidence thy thoughts apply.
On fortune's foretop timely fix thy hold;
Now speak and speed, for Venus loves the bold.
No rules of rhetoric here I need afford;
Only begin, and trust the following word;
It will be witty of its own accord.
Act well the lover; let thy speech abound
In dying words, that represent thy wound;
Distrust not her belief; she will be moved;
All women think they merit to be loved.
Sometimes a man begins to love in jest,
And, after, feels the torment he profest.

For your own sakes be pitiful, ye fair;
For a feigned passion may a true prepare.
By flatteries we prevail on womankind;
As hollow banks by streams are undermined.
Tell her, her face is fair, her eyes are sweet;
Her taper fingers praise, and little feet.
Such praises even the chaste are pleased to hear;
Both maids and matrons hold their beauty dear.
Once naked Pallas with Jove's queen appeared,
And still they grieve that Venus was preferred.
Praise the proud peacock, and he spreads his train;
Be silent, and he pulls it in again.
Pleased is the courser in his rapid race;
Applaud his running, and he mends his pace.
But largely promise, and devoutly swear;
And, if need be, call every God to hear.
Jove sits above, forgiving with a smile
The perjuries that easy maids beguile.
He swore to Juno by the Stygian lake;
Forsworn, he dares not an example make,
Or punish falsehood, for his own dear sake.
'Tis for our interest that the gods should be;
Let us believe them; I believe, they see,
And both reward, and punish equally.
Not that they live above like lazy drones,
Or kings below, supine upon their thrones.
Lead then your lives as present in their sight;
Be just in dealings, and defend the right;
By fraud betray not, nor oppress by might.
But 'tis a venial sin to cheat the fair;
All men have liberty of conscience there.
On cheating nymphs a cheat is well designed;
'Tis a profane and a deceitful kind.
'Tis said, that Egypt for nine years was dry,
Nor Nile did floods, nor heaven did rain supply.
A foreigner at length informed the king,
That slaughtered guests would kindly moisture bring.

The king replied:—On thee the lot shall fall;
Be thou my guest, the sacrifice for all.
Thus Phaleris Perillus taught to low,
And made him season first the brazen cow. *
A rightful doom, the laws of nature cry,
'Tis, the artificers of death should die:
Thus, justly women suffer by deceit;
Their practice authorizes us to cheat.
Beg her, with tears, thy warm desires to grant;
For tears will pierce a heart of adamant.
If tears will not be squeezed, then rub your eye,
Or 'noint the lids, and seem at least to cry.
Kiss, if you can; resistance if she make,
And will not give you kisses, let her take.
Fie, fie, you naughty man, are words of course;
She struggles but to be subdued by force.
Kiss only soft, I charge you, and beware,
With your hard bristles not to brush the fair.
He who has gained a kiss, and gains no more,
Deserves to lose the bliss he got before.
If once she kiss, her meaning is exprest;
There wants but little pushing for the rest;
Which if thou dost not gain, by strength or art,
The name of clown then suits with thy desert;
'Tis downright dulness, and a shameful part.
Perhaps, she calls it force; but, if she 'scape,
She will not thank you for the omitted rape.
The sex is cunning to conceal their fires;
They would be forced e'en to their own desires.
They seem to accuse you, with a downcast sight,
But in their souls confess you did them right.

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* The famous brazen bull of Phalaris is here, *rythmi gratia*, converted into a cow. The story of his inclosing Perillus, the inventor, in the engine which he had contrived, is well-known.

Who might be forced, and yet untouched depart,
Thank with their tongues, but curse you with their heart.
Fair Phœbe and her sister did prefer
To their dull mates the noble ravisher.
What Deidamia did, in days of yore,
The tale is old, but worth the reading o'er.
When Venus had the golden apple gained,
And the just judge fair Helen had obtained;
When she with triumph was at Troy received,
The Trojans joyful, while the Grecians grieved;
They vowed revenge of violated laws,
And Greece was arming in the cuckold's cause:
Achilles, by his mother warned from war,
Disguised his sex, and lurked among the fair.
What means Æacides to spin and sow?
With spear and sword in field thy valour show;
And, leaving this, the nobler Pallas know.
Why dost thou in that hand the distaff wield,
Which is more worthy to sustain the shield?
Or with that other draw the woolly twine,
The same the fates for Hector's thread assign?
Brandish thy faulchion in thy powerful hand,
Which can alone the ponderous lance command.
In the same room by chance the royal maid
Was lodged, and, by his seeming sex betrayed,
Close to her side the youthful hero laid.
I know not how his courtship he began;
But, to her cost, she found it was a man.
'Tis thought she struggled; but withal 'tis thought,
Her wish was to be conquered when she fought.
For when disclosed, and hastening to the field,
He laid his distaff down, and took the shield,
With tears her humble suit she did prefer,
And thought to stay the grateful* ravisher.

* Grateful is here used for pleasing.

She sighs, she sobs, she begs him not to part;
And now 'tis nature, what before was art.
She strives by force her lover to detain,
And wishes to be ravished once again.
This is the sex; they will not first begin,
But, when compelled, are pleased to suffer sin.
Is there, who thinks that women first should woo?
Lay by thy self-conceit, thou foolish beau!
Begin, and save their modesty the shame;
'Tis well for thee, if they receive thy flame.
'Tis decent for a man to speak his mind;
They but expect the occasion to be kind.
Ask, that thou may'st enjoy; she waits for this;
And on thy first advance depends thy bliss:
Even Jove himself was forced to sue for love;
None of the nymphs did first solicit Jove.
But if you find your prayers increase her pride,
Strike sail awhile, and wait another tide.
They fly when we pursue; but make delay,
And, when they see you slacken, they will stay.
Sometimes it profits to conceal your end;
Name not yourself her lover, but her friend.
How many skittish girls have thus been caught!
He proved a lover, who a friend was thought.
Sailors by sun and wind are swarthy made;
A tanned complexion best becomes their trade:
'Tis a disgrace to ploughmen to be fair;
Bluff cheeks they have, and weather-beaten hair:
The ambitious youth, who seeks an olive crown,
Is sun-burnt with his daily toil, and brown;
But if the lover hopes to be in grace,
Wan be his looks, and meagre be his face.
That colour from the fair compassion draws;
She thinks you sick, and thinks herself the cause.
Orion wandered in the woods for love;
His paleness did the nymphs to pity move;
His ghastly visage argued hidden love.

Nor fail a night-cap, in full health, to wear;
Neglect thy dress, and discompose thy hair.
All things are decent, that in love avail;
Read long by night, and study to be pale;
Forsake your food, refuse your needful rest,
Be miserable, that you may be blest.
Shall I complain, or shall I warn you most?
Faith, truth, and friendship in the world are lost;
A little and an empty name they boast.
Trust not thy friend, much less thy mistress praise;
If he believe, thou may'st a rival raise.
'Tis true, Patroclus, by no lust misled,
Sought not to stain his dear companion's bed;
Nor Pylades Hermione embraced;
Even Phædra to Pirithous still was chaste.
But hope not thou, in this vile age, to find
Those rare examples of a faithful mind;
The sea shall sooner with sweet honey flow,
Or from the furzes pears and apples grow.
We sin with gust, we love by fraud to gain,
And find a pleasure in our fellow's pain.
From rival foes you may the fair defend;
But, would you ward the blow, beware your friend:
Beware your brother, and your next of kin;
But from your bosom-friend your care begin.
Here I had ended, but experience finds,
That sundry women are of sundry minds,
With various crotchets filled, and hard to please;
They therefore must be caught by various ways.
All things are not produced in any soil;
This ground for wine is proper, that for oil.
So 'tis in men, but more in womankind;
Different in face, in manners, and in mind;
But wise men shift their sails with every wind.
As changeful Proteus varied oft his shape,
And did in sundry forms and figures 'scape;

A running stream, a standing tree became,
A roaring lion, or a bleating lamb.
Some fish with harpoons, some with darts are struck,
Some drawn with nets, some hang upon the hook;
So turn thyself; and, imitating them,
Try several tricks, and change thy stratagem.
One rule will not for different ages hold;
The jades grow cunning, as they grow more old.
Then talk not bawdy to the bashful maid;
Broad words will make her innocence afraid:
Nor to an ignorant girl of learning speak;
She thinks you conjure, when you talk in Greek.
And hence 'tis often seen, the simple shun
The learned, and into vile embraces run.
Part of my task is done, and part to do;
But here 'tis time to rest myself and you.

FROM

OVID'S AMOURS.

BOOK I. ELEG. I.

For mighty wars I thought to tune my lute,
And make my measures to my subject suit.
Six feet for every verse the Muse designed;
But Cupid, laughing, when he saw my mind,
From every second verse a foot purloined.
Who gave thee, boy, this arbitrary sway,
On subjects, not thy own, commands to lay,
Who Phœbus only and his laws obey?
'Tis more absurd than if the Queen of Love
Should in Minerva's arms to battle move;
Or manly Pallas from that queen should take
Her torch, and o'er the dying lover shake:
In fields as well may Cynthia sow the corn,
Or Ceres wind in woods the bugle-horn:
As well may Phœbus quit the trembling string,
For sword and shield; and Mars may learn to sing.
Already thy dominions are too large;
Be not ambitious of a foreign charge.

If thou wilt reign o'er all, and every where,
The God of Music for his harp may fear.
Thus, when with soaring wings I seek renown,
Thou pluck'st my pinions, and I flutter down.
Could I on such mean thoughts my Muse employ,
I want a mistress, or a blooming boy.—
Thus I complained; his bow the stripling bent,
And chose an arrow fit for his intent.
The shaft his purpose fatally pursues;—
Now, poet, there's a subject for thy Muse!—
He said. Too well, alas, he knows his trade;
For in my breast a mortal wound he made.
Far hence, ye proud hexameters, remove,
My verse is paced and trammelled into love.
With myrtle wreaths my thoughtful brows inclose,
While in unequal verse I sing my woes.

FROM

OVID'S AMOURS.

BOOK I. ELEG. 4.

To his Mistress, whose Husband is invited to a Feast with them. The Poet instructs her how to behave herself in his company.

Your husband will be with us at the treat;
May that be the last supper he shall eat!
And am poor I a guest invited there,
Only to see, while he may touch the fair?
To see you kiss and hug your nauseous lord,
While his lewd hand descends below the board?
Now wonder not that Hippodamia's charms,
At such a sight, the Centaurs urged to arms;
That in a rage they threw their cups aside,
Assailed the bridegroom, and would force the bride.
I am not half a horse, (I would I were!)
Yet hardly can from you my hands forbear.
Take then my counsel; which, observed, may be
Of some importance both to you and me.
Be sure to come before your man be there;
There's nothing can be done: but come, howe'er.

Sit next him, (that belongs to decency,)
But tread upon my foot in passing by;
Read in my looks what silently they speak,
And slily, with your eyes, your answer make.
My lifted eye-brow shall declare my pain;
My right-hand to his fellow shall complain,
And on the back a letter shall design,
Besides a note that shall be writ in wine.
Whene'er you think upon our last embrace,
With your fore-finger gently touch your face;
If any word of mine offend my dear,
Pull, with your hand, the velvet of your ear;
If you are pleased with what I do or say,
Handle your rings, or with your fingers play;
As suppliants use at altars, hold the board,
Whene'er you wish the devil may take your lord.
When he fills for you, never touch the cup,
But bid the officious cuckold drink it up.
The waiter on those services employ;
Drink you, and I will snatch it from the boy,
Watching the part where your sweet mouth hath been,
And thence with eager lips will suck it in.
If he, with clownish manners, thinks it fit
To taste, and offer you the nasty bit,
Reject his greasy kindness, and restore
The unsavoury morsel he had chewed before.
Nor let his arms embrace your neck, nor rest
Your tender cheek upon his hairy breast;
Let not his hand within your bosom stray,
And rudely with your pretty bubbies play;
But, above all, let him no kiss receive!
That's an offence I never can forgive.
Do not, O do not that sweet mouth resign,
Lest I rise up in arms, and cry, 'tis mine.
I shall thrust in betwixt, and, void of fear,
The manifest adulterer will appear.

These things are plain to sight; but more I doubt
What you conceal beneath your petticoat.
Take not his leg between your tender thighs,
Nor, with your hand, provoke my foe to rise.
How many love-inventions I deplore,
Which I myself have practised all before!
How oft have I been forced the robe to lift
In company; to make a homely shift
For a bare bout, ill huddled o'er in haste,
While o'er my side the fair her mantle cast!
You to your husband shall not be so kind;
But, lest you should, your mantle leave behind.
Encourage him to tope; but kiss him not,
Nor mix one drop of water in his pot.
If he be fuddled well, and snores apace,
Then we may take advice from time and place.
When all depart, when compliments are loud,
Be sure to mix among the thickest crowd;
There I will be, and there we cannot miss,
Perhaps to grubble, or at least to kiss.
Alas! what length of labour I employ,
Just to secure a short and transient joy!
For night must part us; and when night is come,
Tucked underneath his arm he leads you home.
He locks you in; I follow to the door,
His fortune envy, and my own deplore.
He kisses you, he more than kisses too;
The outrageous cuckold thinks it all his due.
But add not to his joy by your consent,
And let it not be given, but only lent.
Return no kiss, nor move in any sort;
Make it a dull and a malignant sport.
Had I my wish, he should no pleasure take,
But slubber o'er your business for my sake;
And whate'er fortune shall this night befal,
Coax me to-morrow, by forswearing all.

PREFACE

ON

TRANSLATION,

PREFIXED TO

DRYDEN's SECOND MISCELLANY,

PUBLISHED IN 1685.

For this last half year I have been troubled with the disease (as I may call it) of translation. The cold prose fits of it, which are always the most tedious with me, were spent in the History of the League;* the hot, which succeeded them, in this volume of Verse Miscellanies. The truth is, I fancied to myself a kind of ease in the change of the paroxysm; never suspecting but that the humour would have wasted itself in two or three pastorals of Theocritus, and as many odes of Horace. But finding, or at least thinking I found, something that was more pleasing in them than my ordinary productions, I encouraged myself to renew my old acquaintance with Lucretius

* Mainburg's "History of the League," translated by our author, at the command of Charles II.

and Virgil; and immediately fixed upon some parts of them, which had most affected me in the reading. These were my natural impulses for the undertaking. But there was an accidental motive which was full as forcible, and God forgive him who was the occasion of it. It was my Lord Roscommon's "Essay on Translated Verse;"* which made me uneasy till I tried whether or no I was capable of following his rules, and of reducing the speculation into practice. For, many a fair precept in poetry is, like a seeming demonstration in the mathematics, very specious in the diagram, but failing in the mechanic operation. I think I have generally observed his instructions; I am sure my reason is sufficiently convinced both of their truth and usefulness; which, in other words, is to confess no less a vanity, than to pretend that I have, at least in some places, made examples to his rules. Yet, withal, I must acknowledge, that I have many times exceeded my commission; for I have both added and omitted, and even sometimes very boldly made such expositions of my author's, as no Dutch commentator will forgive me. Perhaps, in such particular passages, I have thought that I discovered some beauty yet undiscovered by those pedants, which none but a poet could have found. Where I have taken away some of their expressions, and cut them shorter, it may possibly be on this consideration, that what was beautiful in the Greek or Latin, would not appear so shining in the English: and where I have enlarged them, I desire the false critics would not always think, that those thoughts are wholly mine, but that either they are secretly in the poet, or may be fairly deduced from him; or at least, if both those considerations should

* First published in 1680.

fail, that my own is of a piece with his, and that if he were living, and an Englishman, they are such as he would probably have written.

For, after all, a translator is to make his author appear as charming as possibly he can, provided he maintains his character, and makes him not unlike himself. Translation is a kind of drawing after the life; where every one will acknowledge there is a double sort of likeness, a good one and a bad. It is one thing to draw the outlines true, the features like, the proportions exact, the colouring itself perhaps tolerable; and another thing to make all these graceful, by the posture, the shadowings, and, chiefly, by the spirit which animates the whole. I cannot, without some indignation, look on an ill copy of an excellent original; much less can I behold with patience Virgil, Homer, and some others, whose beauties I have been endeavouring all my life to imitate, so abused, as I may say, to their faces, by a botching interpreter. What English readers, unacquainted with Greek or Latin, will believe me, or any other man, when we commend those authors, and confess we derive all that is pardonable in us from their fountains, if they take those to be the same poets, whom our Oglebies have translated? But I dare assure them, that a good poet is no more like himself, in a dull translation, than his carcase would be to his living body. There are many, who understand Greek and Latin, and yet are ignorant of their mother-tongue. The proprieties and delicacies of the English are known to few; it is impossible even for a good wit to understand and practise them, without the help of a liberal education, long reading, and digesting of those few good authors we have amongst us, the knowledge of men and manners, the freedom of habitudes and conversation with the best company of both sexes;

and, in short, without wearing off the rust which he contracted while he was laying in a stock of learning. Thus difficult it is to understand the purity of English, and critically to discern not only good writers from bad, and a proper style from a corrupt, but also to distinguish that which is pure in a good author, from that which is vicious and corrupt in him. And for want of all these requisites, or the greatest part of them, most of our ingenious young men take up some cried-up English poet for their model, adore him, and imitate him, as they think, without knowing wherein he is defective, where he is boyish and trifling, wherein either his thoughts are improper to his subject, or his expressions unworthy of his thoughts, or the turn of both is unharmonious. Thus it appears necessary, that a man should be a nice critic in his mother-tongue, before he attempts to translate in a foreign language. Neither is it sufficient, that he be able to judge of words and style; but he must be a master of them too; he must perfectly understand his author's tongue, and absolutely command his own. So that, to be a thorough translator, he must be a thorough poet. Neither is it enough to give his author's sense in good English, in poetical expressions, and in musical numbers; for, though all these are exceeding difficult to perform, there yet remains an harder task; and it is a secret of which few translators have sufficiently thought. I have already hinted a word or two concerning it; that is, the maintaining the character of an author, which distinguishes him from all others, and makes him appear that individual poet whom you would interpret. For example, not only the thoughts, but the style and versification, of Virgil and Ovid are very different: Yet I see, even in our best poets, who have translated some parts of them, that they have

confounded their several talents; and, by endeavouring only at the sweetness and harmony of numbers, have made them both so much alike, that, if I did not know the originals, I should never be able to judge by the copies, which was Virgil, and which was Ovid. It was objected against a late noble painter,* that he drew many graceful pictures, but few of them were like. And this happened to him, because he always studied himself more than those who sat to him. In such translators I can easily distinguish the hand which performed the work, but I cannot distinguish their poet from another. Suppose two authors are equally sweet, yet there is as great distinction to be made in sweetness, as in that of sugar, and that of honey. I can make the difference more plain, by giving you (if it be worth knowing) my own method of proceeding, in my translations out of four several poets in this volume; Virgil, Theocritus, Lucretius, and Horace. In each of these, before I undertook them, I considered the genius and distinguishing character of my author. I looked on Virgil as a succinct, and grave majestic writer; one who weighed, not only every thought, but every word and syllable; who was still aiming to crowd his sense into as narrow a compass as possibly he could; for which reason he is so very figurative, that he requires (I may almost say) a grammar apart to construe him. His verse is every where sounding the very thing in your ears, whose sense it bears; yet the numbers

* Sir Peter Lely, by birth a Dutchman, came to England in 1641, and died in 1680. There is a remarkable similarity between his female portraits, which seems to have arisen from the circumstance mentioned by Dryden, of his bringing all his subjects as near as possible to his own idea of the beautiful. Pope's lines in his praise are too well known to be quoted.

are perpetually varied, to increase the delight of the reader; so that the same sounds are never repeated twice together. On the contrary, Ovid and Claudian, though they write in styles differing from each other, yet have each of them but one sort of music in their verses. All the versification and little variety of Claudian is included within the compass of four or five lines, and then he begins again in the same tenor; perpetually closing his sense at the end of a verse, and that verse commonly which they call golden, or two substantives and two adjectives, with a verb betwixt them to keep the peace. Ovid, with all his sweetness, has as little variety of numbers and sound as he: he is always, as it were, upon the hand-gallop, and his verse runs upon carpet-ground. He avoids, like the other, all synalœphas, or cutting off one vowel when it comes before another in the following word; so that, minding only smoothness, he wants both variety and majesty.—But to return to Virgil: though he is smooth where smoothness is required, yet he is so far from affecting it, that he seems rather to disdain it; frequently makes use of synalœphas, and concludes his sense in the middle of his verse. He is every where above conceits of epigrammatic wit, and gross hyperboles; he maintains majesty in the midst of plainness; he shines, but glares not; and is stately without ambition, which is the vice of Lucan. I drew my definition of poetical wit from my particular consideration of him: for propriety of thoughts and words are only to be found in him; and, where they are proper, they will be delightful. Pleasure follows of necessity, as the effect does the cause; and therefore is not to be put into the definition. This exact propriety of Virgil I particularly regarded, as a great part of his character; but must confess, to my shame, that I have not been able to translate any part of him so well, as to make him appear wholly

like himself: for, where the original is close, no version can reach it in the same compass. Hannibal Caro's,* in the Italian, is the nearest, the most poetical, and the most sonorous of any translation of the Æneids; yet, though he takes the advantage of blank verse, he commonly allows two lines for one of Virgil, and does not always hit his sense. Tasso tells us, in his letters, that Sperone Speroni, a great Italian wit, who was his contemporary, observed of Virgil and Tully, that the Latin orator endeavoured to imitate the copiousness of Homer, the Greek poet; and that the Latin poet made it his business to reach the conciseness of Demosthenes, the Greek orator. Virgil therefore, being so very sparing of his words, and leaving so much to be imagined by the reader, can never be translated as he ought, in any modern tongue. To make him copious, is to alter his character; and to translate him line for line, is impossible; because the Latin is naturally a more succinct language than either the Italian, Spanish, French, or even than the English, which, by reason of its monosyllables, is far the most compendious of them. Virgil is much the closest of any Roman poet, and the Latin hexameter has more feet than the English heroick.

Besides all this, an author has the choice of his own thoughts and words, which a translator has not; he is confined by the sense of the inventor to those expressions which are the nearest to it: so that Virgil, studying brevity, and having the command of his own language, could bring those words into a narrow compass, which a translator cannot render without circumlocutions. In short, they, who have called him the torture of grammarians, might also have called him the plague of transla-

* Annibale Caro died at Rome, 1566.

tors; for he seems to have studied not to be translated. I own that, endeavouring to turn his "Nisus and Euryalus" as close as I was able, I have performed that episode too literally; that, giving more scope to "Mezentius and Lausus," that version, which has more of the majesty of Virgil, has less of his conciseness; and all that I can promise for myself, is only, that I have done both better than Ogleby, and perhaps as well as Caro; so that, methinks, I come like a malefactor, to make a speech upon the gallows, and to warn all other poets, by my sad example, from the sacrilege of translating Virgil. Yet, by considering him so carefully as I did before my attempt, I have made some faint resemblance of him; and, had I taken more time, might possibly have succeeded better; but never so well as to have satisfied myself.

He who excels all other poets in his own language, were it possible to do him right, must appear above them in our tongue, which, as my Lord Roscommon justly observes, approaches nearest to the Roman in its majesty; nearest indeed, but with a vast interval betwixt them. There is an inimitable grace in Virgil's words, and in them principally consists that beauty, which gives so inexpressible a pleasure to him who best understands their force. This diction of his (I must once again say) is never to be copied; and, since it cannot, he will appear but lame in the best translation. The turns of his verse, his breakings, his propriety, his numbers, and his gravity, I have as far imitated, as the poverty of our language, and the hastiness of my performance, would allow. I may seem sometimes to have varied from his sense; but I think the greatest variations may be fairly deduced from him; and where I leave his commentators, it may be I understand him better: at least I writ without consulting them in many places. But two particular lines in Mezentius

and Lausus, I cannot so easily excuse. They are indeed remotely allied to Virgil's sense; but they are too like the trifling tenderness of Ovid, and were printed before I had considered them enough to alter them. The first of them I have forgotten, and cannot easily retrieve, because the copy is at the press. The second is this:

> When Lausus died, I was already slain.

This appears pretty enough at first sight; but I am convinced, for many reasons, that the expression is too bold; that Virgil would not have said it, though Ovid would. The reader may pardon it, if he please, for the freeness of the confession; and instead of that, and the former, admit these two lines, which are more according to the author:

> Nor ask I life, nor fought with that design;
> As I had used my fortune, use thou thine.

Having with much ado got clear of Virgil, I have, in the next place, to consider the genius of Lucretius, whom I have translated more happily in those parts of him which I undertook. If he was not of the best age of Roman poëtry, he was at least of that which preceded it;* and he himself refined it to that degree of perfection, both in the language and the thoughts, that he left an easy task to Virgil; who, as he succeeded him in time, so he copied his excellencies; for the method of the Georgics is plainly derived from him. Lucretius had chosen a subject naturally crabbed; he therefore adorned it with poetical descriptions, and precepts of morality, in the beginning and ending of his books, which you see Virgil has imitated with great success in those four books, which, in my opinion, are more perfect in their kind than even his

* He died in the year of Rome 699, before the commencement of the Augustan age.

divine Æneids. The turn of his verses he has likewise followed in those places which Lucretius has most laboured, and some of his very lines he has transplanted into his own works, without much variation. If I am not mistaken, the distinguishing character of Lucretius (I mean of his soul and genius) is a certain kind of noble pride, and positive assertion of his opinions. He is every where confident of his own reason, and assuming an absolute command, not only over his vulgar reader, but even his patron Memmius. For he is always bidding him attend, as if he had the rod over him; and using a magisterial authority, while he instructs him. From his time to ours, I know none so like him, as our poet and philosopher of Malmesbury.* This is that perpetual dictatorship, which is exercised by Lucretius; who, though often in the wrong, yet seems to deal *bonâ fide* with his reader, and tells him nothing but what he thinks; in which plain sincerity, I believe, he differs from our Hobbes, who could not but be convinced, or at least doubt of some eternal truths, which he has opposed. But for Lucretius, he seems to disdain all manner of replies, and is so confident of his cause, that he is before-hand with his antagonists; urging for them whatever he imagined they could say, and leaving them, as he supposes, without an objection for the future: all this, too, with so much scorn and indignation, as if he were assured of the triumph, before he entered into the lists. From this sublime and daring genius of his, it must of necessity come to pass, that his thoughts must be masculine, full of argumentation, and that sufficiently warm. From the

* The celebrated Hobbes, who died in 1679.

same fiery temper proceeds the loftiness of his expressions, and the perpetual torrent of his verse, where the barrenness of his subject does not too much constrain the quickness of his fancy. For there is no doubt to be made, but that he could have been every where as poetical, as he is in his descriptions, and in the moral part of his philosophy, if he had not aimed more to instruct, in his system of nature, than to delight. But he was bent upon making Memmius a materialist, and teaching him to defy an invisible power: in short, he was so much an atheist, that he forgot sometimes to be a poet. These are the considerations, which I had of that author, before I attempted to translate some parts of him. And accordingly I laid by my natural diffidence and scepticism for a while, to take up that dogmatical way of his, which, as I said, is so much his character, as to make him that individual poet. As for his opinions concerning the mortality of the soul, they are so absurd, that I cannot, if I would, believe them. I think a future state demonstrable even by natural arguments; at least, to take away rewards and punishments is only a pleasing prospect to a man, who resolves beforehand not to live morally. But, on the other side, the thought of being nothing after death is a burthen insupportable to a virtuous man, even though a heathen. We naturally aim at happiness, and cannot bear to have it confined to the shortness of our present being; especially when we consider, that virtue is generally unhappy in this world, and vice fortunate: so that it is hope of futurity alone, that makes this life tolerable, in expectation of a better. Who would not commit all the excesses, to which he is prompted by his natural inclinations, if he may do them with security while he is alive, and be incapable of punish-

ment after he is dead? If he be cunning and secret enough to avoid the laws, there is no band of morality to restrain him: for fame and reputation are weak ties; many men have not the least sense of them. Powerful men are only awed by them, as they conduce to their interest, and that not always, when a passion is predominant; and no man will be contained within the bounds of duty, when he may safely transgress them. These are my thoughts abstractedly, and without entering into the notions of our Christian faith, which is the proper business of divines.

But there are other arguments in this poem (which I have turned into English) not belonging to the mortality of the soul, which are strong enough to a reasonable man, to make him less in love with life, and consequently in less apprehensions of death. Such as are the natural satiety proceeding from a perpetual enjoyment of the same things; the inconveniences of old age, which make him incapable of corporeal pleasures; the decay of understanding and memory, which render him contemptible, and useless to others. These, and many other reasons, so pathetically urged, so beautifully expressed so adorned with examples, and so admirably raised by the *prosopopeia* of Nature, who is brought in speaking to her children with so much authority and vigour, deserve the pains I have taken with them, which I hope have not been unsuccessful, or unworthy of my author: at least I must take the liberty to own, that I was pleased with my own endeavours, which but rarely happens to me; and that I am not dissatisfied upon the review of any thing I have done in this author.

It is true, there is something, and that of some moment, to be objected against my englishing the Nature of Love, from the fourth book of Lucretius;

and I can less easily answer why I translated it, than why I thus translated it. The objection arises from the obscenity of the subject; which is aggravated by the too lively and alluring delicacy of the verses. In the first place, without the least formality of an excuse, I own it pleased me; and let my enemies make the worst they can of this confession. I am not yet so secure from that passion, but that I want my author's antidotes against it. He has given the truest and most philosophical account, both of the disease and remedy, which I ever found in any author; for which reasons I translated him. But it will be asked, why I turned him into this luscious English, for I will not give it a worse word. Instead of an answer, I would ask again of my supercilious adversaries, whether I am not bound, when I translate an author, to do him all the right I can, and to translate him to the best advantage? If, to mince his meaning, which I am satisfied was honest and instructive, I had either omitted some part of what he said, or taken from the strength of his expression, I certainly had wronged him; and that freeness of thought and words being thus cashiered in my hands, he had no longer been Lucretius. If nothing of this kind be to be read, physicians must not study nature, anatomies must not be seen, and somewhat I could say of particular passages in books, which, to avoid profaneness, I do not name. But the intention qualifies the act; and both mine and my author's were to instruct, as well as please. It is most certain, that bare-faced bawdry is the poorest pretence to wit imaginable. If I should say otherwise, I should have two great authorities against me: the one is the "Essay on Poetry," which I publicly valued before I knew the author of it, and with the commendation of which my Lord Roscommon so hap-

pily begins his "Essay on Translated Verse;" the other is no less than our admired Cowley, who says the same thing in other words; for, in his "Ode concerning Wit," he writes thus of it:

> Much less can that have any place,
> At which a virgin hides her face;
> Such dross the fire must purge away; 'tis just
> The author blush, there, where the reader must.

Here indeed Mr Cowley goes farther than the Essay; for he asserts plainly, that obscenity has no place in wit; the other only says, it is a poor pretence to it, or an ill sort of wit, which has nothing more to support it than bare-faced ribaldry; which is both unmannerly in itself, and fulsome to the reader. But neither of these will reach my case: for, in the first place, I am only the translator, not the inventor; so that the heaviest part of the censure falls upon Lucretius, before it reaches me: in the next place, neither he nor I have used the grossest words, but the cleanliest metaphors we could find, to palliate the broadness of the meaning; and, to conclude, have carried the poetical part no farther, than the philosophical exacted.*

There is one mistake of mine, which I will not lay to the printer's charge, who has enough to answer for in false pointings; it is in the word, *viper:* I would have the verse run thus:

> The scorpion, love, must on the wound be bruised. †

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* I wish our author had attended to his noble friend Roscommon's recommendation:

> Immodest words admit of no defence,
> For want of decency is want of sense;
> What moderate fop would range the Park, or stews,
> Who among troops of faultless nymphs might chuse?

† This error, however, went through the subsequent editions.

There are a sort of blundering, half-witted people, who make a great deal of noise about a verbal slip; though Horace would instruct them better in true criticism:

> ——— *non ego paucis*
> *Offendar maculis, quas aut incuria fudit,*
> *Aut humana parùm cavit natura.*

True judgment in poetry, like that in painting, takes a view of the whole together, whether it be good or not; and where the beauties are more than the faults, concludes for the poet against the little judge It is a sign that malice is hard driven, when it is forced to lay hold on a word or syllable: to arraign a man is one thing, and to cavil at him is another. In the midst of an ill-natured generation of scribblers, there is always justice enough left in mankind, to protect good writers: and they too are obliged, both by humanity and interest, to espouse each other's cause, against false critics, who are the common enemies. This last consideration puts me in mind of what I owe to the ingenious and learned translator of Lucretius.* I have not

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* Thomas Creech, a particular friend of our author. He was born in 1659, and in June 1700 committed suicide; for which rash action no adequate cause has been assigned. Besides the translation of Lucretius, which is his principal work, he executed an indifferent version of Horace, and translated parts of Theocritus, Ovid, Juvenal, Virgil, &c. In his translation of Lucretius, he omitted the indelicate part of the Fourth Book; a deficiency which Dryden thought fit to supply, for which he has above assigned some very inadequate reasons. Creech's Lucretius first appeared at Oxford, in 8vo, 1682, and was reprinted in the year following. The annotations, to which our author alludes a little lower, were originally attached to a Latin edition of Lucretius, superintended by Creech, and afterwards transferred to his English version. They display great learning, and an intimate acquaintance with the Epicurean philosophy.

here designed to rob him of any part of that commendation which he has so justly acquired by the whole author, whose fragments only fall to my portion. What I have now performed is no more than I intended above twenty years ago. The ways of our translation are very different. He follows him more closely than I have done, which became an interpreter of the whole poem: I take more liberty, because it best suited with my design, which was, to make him as pleasing as I could. He had been too voluminous, had he used my method in so long a work; and I had certainly taken his, had I made it my business to translate the whole. The preference, then, is justly his; and I join with Mr Evelyn in the confession of it, with this additional advantage to him, that his reputation is already established in this poet, mine is to make its fortune in the world. If I have been any where obscure, in following our common author, or if Lucretius himself is to be condemned, I refer myself to his excellent annotations, which I have often read, and always with some new pleasure.

My preface begins already to swell upon me, and looks as if I were afraid of my reader, by so tedious a bespeaking of him; and yet I have Horace and Theocritus upon my hands; but the Greek gentleman shall quickly be dispatched, because I have more business with the Roman.

That which distinguishes Theocritus from all other poets, both Greek and Latin, and which raises him even above Virgil in his Eclogues, is the inimitable tenderness of his passions, and the natural expression of them in words so becoming of a pastoral. A simplicity shines through all he writes. He shows his art and learning, by disguising both. His shepherds never rise above their country education in their complaints of love. There is the same

difference betwixt him and Virgil, as there is betwixt Tasso's "Aminta" and the "Pastor Fido" of Guarini. Virgil's shepherds are too well read in the philosophy of Epicurus and of Plato, and Guarini's seem to have been bred in courts; but Theocritus and Tasso have taken theirs from cottages and plains. It was said of Tasso, in relation to his similitudes, *mai esce del bosco*, that he never departed from the woods; that is, all his comparisons were taken from the country. The same may be said of our Theocritus. He is softer than Ovid; he touches the passions more delicately, and performs all this out of his own fund, without diving into the arts and sciences for a supply. Even his Doric dialect has an incomparable sweetness in its clownishness, like a fair shepherdess in her country russet, talking in a Yorkshire tone. This was impossible for Virgil to imitate; because the severity of the Roman language denied him that advantage. Spenser has endeavoured it in his "Shepherd's Calendar;" but neither will it succeed in English; for which reason I forbore to attempt it. For Theocritus writ to Sicilians, who spoke that dialect; and I direct this part of my translations to our ladies, who neither understand, nor will take pleasure in such homely expressions. I proceed to Horace.

Take him in parts, and he is chiefly to be considered in his three different talents, as he was a critic, a satirist, and a writer of odes. His morals are uniform, and run through all of them; for, let his Dutch commentators say what they will, his philosophy was Epicurean; and he made use of gods and providence only to serve a turn in poetry. But since neither his Criticisms, which are the most instructive of any that are written in this art, nor his Satires, which are incomparably beyond Juvenal's, (if to laugh and rally is to be preferred to railing and

declaiming,) are no part of my present undertaking, I confine myself wholly to his Odes. These are also of several sorts: some of them are panegyrical, others moral, the rest jovial, or (if I may so call them) Bacchanalian. As difficult as he makes it, and as indeed it is, to imitate Pindar, yet, in his most elevated flights, and in the sudden changes of his subject with almost imperceptible connections, that Theban poet is his master. But Horace is of the more bounded fancy, and confines himself strictly to one sort of verse, or stanza, in every Ode. That which will distinguish his style from all other poets, is the elegance of his words, and the numerousness of his verse. There is nothing so delicately turned in all the Roman language. There appears in every part of his diction, or (to speak English) in all his expressions, a kind of noble and bold purity. His words are chosen with as much exactness as Virgil's; but there seems to be a greater spirit in them. There is a secret happiness attends his choice, which in Petronius is called *curiosa felicitas*, and which I suppose he had from the *feliciter audere* of Horace himself. But the most distinguishing part of all his character seems to me to be his briskness, his jollity, and his good humour; and those I have chiefly endeavoured to copy. His other excellencies, I confess, are above my imitation. One Ode, which infinitely pleased me in the reading, I have attempted to translate in Pindaric verse: it is that, which is inscribed to the present Earl of Rochester, to whom I have particular obligations, which this small testimony of my gratitude can never pay. * It is his darling in the Latin, and I

* Our author, in the Dedication to "Cleomenes," compliments Lord Rochester on his power of critically understanding the beauties of Horace, and upon his particular affection for this particular Ode. See Vol. VIII. p. 193.

have taken some pains to make it my master-piece in English: for which reason I took this kind of verse, which allows more latitude than any other. Every one knows it was introduced into our language, in this age, by the happy genius of Mr Cowley. The seeming easiness of it has made it spread; but it has not been considered enough, to be so well cultivated. It languishes in almost every hand but his, and some very few, whom (to keep the rest in countenance) I do not name. He, indeed, has brought it as near perfection as was possible in so short a time. But, if I may be allowed to speak my mind modestly, and without injury to his sacred ashes, somewhat of the purity of English, somewhat of more equal thoughts, somewhat of sweetness in the numbers, in one word, somewhat of a finer turn, and more lyrical verse, is yet wanting. As for the soul of it, which consists in the warmth and vigour of fancy, the masterly figures, and the copiousness of imagination, he has excelled all others in this kind. Yet if the kind itself be capable of more perfection, though rather in the ornamental parts of it than the essential, what rules of morality or respect have I broken, in naming the defects, that they may hereafter be amended? Imitation is a nice point, and there are few poets who deserve to be models in all they write. Milton's "Paradise Lost" is admirable; but am I therefore bound to maintain, that there are no flats amongst his elevations, when it is evident he creeps along sometimes for above an hundred lines together? Cannot I admire the height of his invention, and the strength of his expression, without defending his antiquated words, and the perpetual harshness of their sound? It is as much commendation as a man can bear, to own him excellent; all beyond it is idolatry. Since Pindar was the prince of lyric

poets, let me have leave to say, that, in imitating him, our numbers should, for the most part, be lyrical: for variety, or rather where the majesty of thought requires it, they may be stretched to the English heroick of five feet, and to the French Alexandrine of six. But the ear must preside, and direct the judgment to the choice of numbers. Without the nicety of this, the harmony of Pindaric verse can never be complete; the cadency of one line must be a rule to that of the next; and the sound of the former must slide gently into that which follows, without leaping from one extreme into another. It must be done like the shadowings of a picture, which fall by degrees into a darker colour. I shall be glad, if I have so explained myself as to be understood; but if I have not, *quod nequeo dicere, et sentio tantum*,* must be my excuse.

There remains much more to be said on this subject; but, to avoid envy, I will be silent. What I have said is the general opinion of the best judges, and in a manner has been forced from me, by seeing a noble sort of poetry so happily restored by one man, and so grossly copied by almost all the rest. A musical ear, and a great genius, if another Mr Cowley could arise in another age, may bring it to perfection. In the mean time,

> ———*fungar vice cotis, acutum*
> *Reddere quæ ferrum valet, expers ipsa secandi.*

I hope it will not be expected from me, that I should say any thing of my fellow undertakers in this Miscellany. Some of them are too nearly

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* Mr Malone has observed, that this quotation, as well as that which follows, is inaccurate; the words of Juvenal are, "nequeo *monstrare*, et sentio tantum."

related to me, to be commended without suspicion of partiality;† others I am sure need it not; and the rest I have not perused.

To conclude, I am sensible that I have written this too hastily and too loosely; I fear I have been tedious, and, which is worse, it comes out from the first draught, and uncorrected. This I grant is no excuse; for it may be reasonably urged, why did he not write with more leisure, or, if he had it not, (which was certainly my case,) why did he attempt to write on so nice a subject? The objection is unanswerable; but, in part of recompence, let me assure the reader, that, in hasty productions, he is sure to meet with an author's present sense, which cooler thoughts would possibly have disguised. There is undoubtedly more of spirit, though not of judgment, in these uncorrect essays; and consequently, though my hazard be the greater, yet the reader's pleasure is not the less.

JOHN DRYDEN.

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† Dryden's son was amongst the contributors.

TRANSLATIONS

FROM

THEOCRITUS.

AMARYLLIS:

OR,

THE THIRD IDYLLIUM OF THEOCRITUS,

PARAPHRASED. *

To Amaryllis love compels my way,
My browzing goats upon the mountains stray;
O Tityrus, tend them well, and see them fed
In pastures fresh, and to their watering led;
And 'ware the ridgling with his budding head.
Ah, beauteous nymph! can you forget your love,
The conscious grottos, and the shady grove,
Where stretched at ease your tender limbs were laid,
Your nameless beauties nakedly displayed?
Then I was called your darling, your desire,
With kisses such as set my soul on fire:
But you are changed, yet I am still the same;
My heart maintains for both a double flame,
Grieved, but unmoved, and patient of your scorn;
So faithful I, and you so much forsworn!
I die, and death will finish all my pain;
Yet, ere I die, behold me once again:

* This appeared in the First Miscellany.

Am I so much deformed, so changed of late?
What partial judges are our love and hate!
Ten wildings have I gathered for my dear;
How ruddy, like your lips, their streaks appear!
Far-off you viewed them with a longing eye
Upon the topmost branch (the tree was high);
Yet nimbly up, from bough to bough, I swerved, *
And for to-morrow have ten more reserved.
Look on me kindly, and some pity shew,
Or give me leave at least to look on you.
Some god transform me by his heavenly power,
Even to a bee to buzz within your bower,
The winding ivy-chaplet to invade,
And folded fern, that your fair forehead shade.
Now to my cost the force of love I find,
The heavy hand it bears on human kind.
The milk of tygers was his infant food,
Taught from his tender years the taste of blood;
His brother whelps and he ran wild about the wood.
Ah nymph, trained up in his tyrannic court,
To make the sufferings of your slaves your sport!
Unheeded ruin! treacherous delight!
O polished hardness, softened to the sight!
Whose radiant eyes your ebon brows adorn,
Like midnight those, and these like break of morn!
Smile once again, revive me with your charms,
And let me die contented in your arms.
I would not ask to live another day,
Might I but sweetly kiss my soul away.

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* To swerve, as the word is here used, means to draw one's self up a tree by clinging round it with the legs and arms. It occurs in the old ballad of Sir Andrew Barton, where he sends one of his men aloft:

Then Gordon swarved the maine-mast tree,
He swarved it with might and main.
Reliques of Ancient Poetry, Vol. II. p. 192.

Ah, why am I from empty joys debarred?
For kisses are but empty when compared.
I rave, and in my raging fit shall tear
The garland, which I wove for you to wear,
Of parsley, with a wreath of ivy bound,
And bordered with a rosy edging round.
What pangs I feel, unpitied and unheard!
Since I must die, why is my fate deferred!
I strip my body of my shepherd's frock;
Behold that dreadful downfal of a rock,
Where yon old fisher views the waves from high!
'Tis that convenient leap I mean to try.
You would be pleased to see me plunge to shore,
But better pleased if I should rise no more.
I might have read my fortune long ago,
When, seeking my success in love to know,
I tried the infallible prophetic way,
A poppy-leaf upon my palm to lay.
I struck, and yet no lucky crack did follow;
Yet I struck hard, and yet the leaf lay hollow;
And, which was worse, if any worse could prove,
The withering leaf foreshowed your withering love.
Yet farther,—ah, how far a lover dares!
My last recourse I had to sieve and sheers,
And told the witch Agreo my disease:
(Agreo, that in harvest used to lease;
But, harvest done, to chare-work did aspire;
Meat, drink, and two-pence was her daily hire;)
To work she went, her charms she muttered o'er,
And yet the resty sieve wagged ne'er the more;
I wept for woe, the testy beldame swore,
And, foaming with her God, foretold my fate,
That I was doomed to love, and you to hate.
A milk-white goat for you I did provide;
Two milk-white kids run frisking by her side,

For which the nut-brown lass, Erithacis,
Full often offered many a savoury kiss.
Hers they shall be, since you refuse the price;
What madman would o'erstand his market twice!
My right eye itches, some good-luck is near,
Perhaps my Amaryllis may appear;
I'll set up such a note as she shall hear.
What nymph but my melodious voice would move?
She must be flint, if she refuse my love.
Hippomenes, who ran with noble strife
To win his lady, or to lose his life,
(What shift some men will make to get a wife!)
Threw down a golden apple in her way;
For all her haste, she could not choose but stay:
Renown said, Run; the glittering bribe cried, Hold;
The man might have been hanged, but for his gold.
Yet some suppose 'twas love, (some few indeed!)
That stopt the fatal fury of her speed:
She saw, she sighed; her nimble feet refuse
Their wonted speed, and she took pains to lose.
A prophet some, and some a poet cry, *
(No matter which, so neither of them lie,)
From steepy Othry's top to Pylus drove
His herd, and for his pains enjoyed his love.
If such another wager should be laid,
I'll find the man, if you can find the maid.
Why name I men, when love extended finds
His power on high, and in celestial minds?

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* Melampus, the son of Amythaon, was a prophet and physician. Tibullus cites him in the character of an augur:

———*compertum est veracibus ut mihi signis,*
Queis Amythaonius nequeat certare Melampus.

As a physician, he discovered the use of hellebore; thence called Melampodium.

Venus the shepherd's homely habit took,
And managed something else besides the crook;
Nay, when Adonis died, was heard to roar,
And never from her heart forgave the boar.
How blest was fair Endymion with his moon,
Who sleeps on Latmos' top from night to noon!
What Jason from Medea's love possest,
You shall not hear, but know 'tis like the rest.
My aching head can scarce support the pain;
This cursed love will surely turn my brain:
Feel how it shoots, and yet you take no pity;
Nay, then, 'tis time to end my doleful ditty.
A clammy sweat does o'er my temples creep,
My heavy eyes are urged with iron sleep;
I lay me down to gasp my latest breath,
The wolves will get a breakfast by my death;
Yet scarce enough their hunger to supply,
For love has made me carrion ere I die.

THE

EPITHALAMIUM

OF

HELEN AND MENELAUS.

FROM THE

EIGHTEENTH IDYLLIUM OF THEOCRITUS. *

Twelve Spartan virgins, noble, young, and fair,
With violet wreaths adorned their flowing hair;
And to the pompous palace did resort,
Where Menelaus kept his royal court.
There, hand in hand, a comely choir they led,
To sing a blessing to his nuptial bed,
With curious needles wrought, and painted flowers bespread.
Jove's beauteous daughter now his bride must be,
And Jove himself was less a God than he;

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* This and the three following Idylliums were first published in the Second Miscellany.

For this their artful hands instruct the lute to sound,
Their feet assist their hands, and justly beat the ground.
This was their song:—Why, happy bridegroom, why,
Ere yet the stars are kindled in the sky,
Ere twilight shades, or evening dews are shed,
Why dost thou steal so soon away to bed?
Has Somnus brushed thy eye-lids with his rod,
Or do thy legs refuse to bear their load,
With flowing bowls of a more generous god?
If gentle slumber on thy temples creep,
(But, naughty man, thou dost not mean to sleep,)
Betake thee to thy bed, thou drowzy drone,
Sleep by thyself, and leave thy bride alone:
Go, leave her with her maiden mates to play
At sports more harmless till the break of day;
Give us this evening; thou hast morn and night,
And all the year before thee, for delight.
O happy youth! to thee, among the crowd
Of rival princes, Cupid sneezed aloud;
And every lucky omen sent before,
To meet thee landing on the Spartan shore.
Of all our heroes, thou canst boast alone,
That Jove, whene'er he thunders, calls thee son;
Betwixt two sheets thou shalt enjoy her bare,
With whom no Grecian virgin can compare;
So soft, so sweet, so balmy, and so fair.
A boy, like thee, would make a kingly line;
But oh, a girl like her must be divine.
Her equals we in years, but not in face,
Twelve score viragos of the Spartan race,
While naked to Eurotas' banks we bend,
And there in manly exercise contend,
When she appears, are all eclipsed and lost,
And hide the beauties that we made our boast.
So, when the night and winter disappear,
The purple morning, rising with the year,

Salutes the spring, as her celestial eyes
Adorn the world, and brighten all the skies;
So beauteous Helen shines among the rest,
Tall, slender, straight, with all the Graces blest.
As pines the mountains, or as fields the corn,
Or as Thessalian steeds the race adorn;
So rosy-coloured Helen is the pride
Of Lacedemon, and of Greece beside.
Like her no nymph can willing osiers bend
In basket-works, which painted streaks commend;
With Pallas in the loom she may contend.
But none, ah! none can animate the lyre,
And the mute strings with vocal souls inspire;
Whether the learned Minerva be her theme,
Or chaste Diana bathing in the stream,
None can record their heavenly praise so well
As Helen, in whose eyes ten thousand Cupids dwell.
O fair, O graceful! yet with maids enrolled,
But whom to-morrow's sun a matron shall behold!
Yet ere to-morrow's sun shall show his head,
The dewy paths of meadows we will tread,
For crowns and chaplets to adorn thy head.
Where all shall weep, and wish for thy return,
As bleating lambs their absent mother mourn.
Our noblest maids shall to thy name bequeath
The boughs of Lotos, formed into a wreath.
This monument, thy maiden beauties due,
High on a plane-tree shall be hung to view;
On the smooth rind the passenger shall see
Thy name engraved, and worship Helen's tree;
Balm, from a silver-box distilled around,
Shall all bedew the roots, and scent the sacred ground.
The balm, 'tis true, can aged plants prolong,
But Helen's name will keep it ever young.
Hail bride, hail bridegroom, son-in-law to Jove!
With fruitful joys Latona bless your love!

Let Venus furnish you with full desires,
Add vigour to your wills, and fuel to your fires!
Almighty Jove augment your wealthy store,
Give much to you, and to his grandsons more!
From generous loins a generous race will spring,
Each girl, like her, a queen; each boy, like you, a king.
Now sleep, if sleep you can; but while you rest,
Sleep close, with folded arms, and breast to breast.
Rise in the morn; but oh! before you rise,
Forget not to perform your morning sacrifice.
We will be with you ere the crowing cock
Salutes the light, and struts before his feathered flock.
Hymen, oh Hymen, to thy triumphs run,
And view the mighty spoils thou hast in battle won!

THE

DESPAIRING LOVER.

FROM THE

TWENTY-THIRD IDYLLIUM OF THEOCRITUS.

With inauspicious love, a wretched swain
Pursued the fairest nymph of all the plain;
Fairest indeed, but prouder far than fair,
She plunged him hopeless in a deep despair:
Her heavenly form too haughtily she prized,
His person hated, and his gifts despised;
Nor knew the force of Cupid's cruel darts,
Nor feared his awful power on human hearts;
But either from her hopeless lover fled,
Or with disdainful glances shot him dead.
No kiss, no look, to cheer the drooping boy,
No word she spoke, she scorned even to deny;
But, as a hunted panther casts about
Her glaring eyes, and pricks her listening ears to scout;
So she, to shun his toils, her cares employed,
And fiercely in her savage freedom joyed.
Her mouth she writhed, her forehead taught to frown,
Her eyes to sparkle fires to love unknown;

Her sallow cheeks her envious mind did shew,
And every feature spoke aloud the curstness of a shrew.
Yet could not he his obvious fate escape;
His love still dressed her in a pleasing shape;
And every sullen frown, and bitter scorn,
But fanned the fuel that too fast did burn.
Long time, unequal to his mighty pain,
He strove to curb it, but he strove in vain;
At last his woes broke out, and begged relief
With tears, the dumb petitioners of grief;
With tears so tender, as adorned his love,
And any heart, but only hers, would move.
Trembling before her bolted doors he stood,
And there poured out the unprofitable flood;
Staring his eyes, and hagard was his look;
Then, kissing first the threshold, thus he spoke.
Ah nymph, more cruel than of human race!
Thy tygress heart belies thy angel face;
Too well thou show'st thy pedigree from stone,
Thy grandame's was the first by Pyrrha thrown;
Unworthy thou to be so long desired;
But so my love, and so my fate required.
I beg not now (for 'tis in vain) to live;
But take this gift, the last that I can give.
This friendly cord shall soon decide the strife
Betwixt my lingering love and loathsome life:
This moment puts an end to all my pain;
I shall no more despair, nor thou disdain.
Farewell, ungrateful and unkind! I go
Condemned by thee to those sad shades below.
I go the extremest remedy to prove,
To drink oblivion, and to drench my love:
There happily to lose my long desires;
But ah! what draught so deep to quench my fires?
Farewell, ye never-opening gates, ye stones,
And threshold guilty of my midnight moans!

What I have suffered here ye know too well;
What I shall do, the Gods and I can tell.
The rose is fragrant, but it fades in time;
The violet sweet, but quickly past the prime;
White lilies hang their heads, and soon decay,
And whiter snow in minutes melts away:
Such is your blooming youth, and withering so;
The time will come, it will, when you shall know
The rage of love; your haughty heart shall burn
In flames like mine, and meet a like return.
Obdurate as you are, oh! hear at least
My dying prayers, and grant my last request!—
When first you ope your doors, and, passing by,
The sad ill-omened object meets your eye,
Think it not lost a moment if you stay;
The breathless wretch, so made by you, survey;
Some cruel pleasure will from thence arise,
To view the mighty ravage of your eyes.
I wish (but oh! my wish is vain, I fear)
The kind oblation of a falling tear.
Then loose the knot, and take me from the place,
And spread your mantle o'er my grisly face;
Upon my livid lips bestow a kiss,—
O envy not the dead, they feel not bliss!
Nor fear your kisses can restore my breath;
Even you are not more pitiless than death.
Then for my corpse a homely grave provide,
Which love and me from public scorn may hide;
Thrice call upon my name, thrice beat your breast,
And hail me thrice to everlasting rest:
Last, let my tomb this sad inscription bear;—
"A wretch, whom love has killed, lies buried here;
"O passengers, Aminta's eyes beware."
Thus having said, and furious with his love,
He heaved, with more than human force, to move

A weighty stone, (the labour of a team,)
And, raised from thence, he reached the neighbouring beam;
Around its bulk a sliding knot he throws,
And fitted to his neck the fatal noose;
Then, spurning backward, took a swing, till death
Crept up, and stopt the passage of his breath.
The bounce burst ope the door; the scornful fair
Relentless looked, and saw him beat his quivering feet in air;
Nor wept his fate, nor cast a pitying eye,
Nor took him down, but brushed regardless by;
And, as she past, her chance or fate was such,
Her garments touched the dead, polluted by the touch.
Next to the dance, thence to the bath did move;
The bath was sacred to the God of Love;
Whose injured image, with a wrathful eye,
Stood threatning from a pedestal on high.
Nodding a while, and watchful of his blow,
He fell, and, falling, crushed the ungrateful nymph below:
Her gushing blood the pavement all besmeared;
And this her last expiring voice was heard;—
"Lovers, farewell, revenge has reached my scorn;
"Thus warned, be wise, and love for love return."

DAPHNIS AND CHLORIS.

FROM THE

TWENTY SEVENTH IDYLLIUM OF THEOCRITUS.

DAPHNIS.

THE shepherd Paris bore the Spartan bride
By force away, and then by force enjoyed;
But I by free consent can boast a bliss,
A fairer Helen, and a sweeter kiss.

CHLORIS.

Kisses are empty joys, and soon are o'er.

DAPHNIS.

A kiss betwixt the lips is something more.

CHLORIS.

I wipe my mouth, and where's your kissing then?

DAPHNIS.

I swear you wipe it to be kissed agen.

CHLORIS.

Go, tend your herd, and kiss your cows at home;
I am a maid, and in my beauty's bloom.

DAPHNIS.

'Tis well remembered; do not waste your time,
But wisely use it ere you pass your prime.

CHLORIS.

Blown roses hold their sweetness to the last,
And raisins keep their luscious native taste.

DAPHNIS.

The sun's too hot; those olive shades are near;
I fain would whisper something in your ear.

CHLORIS.

'Tis honest talking where we may be seen;
God knows what secret mischief you may mean;
I doubt you'll play the wag, and kiss again.

DAPHNIS.

At least beneath yon elm you need not fear;
My pipe's in tune, if you're disposed to hear.

CHLORIS.

Play by yourself, I dare not venture thither;
You, and your naughty pipe, go hang together.

DAPHNIS.

Coy nymph, beware, lest Venus you offend.

CHLORIS.

I shall have chaste Diana still to friend.

DAPHNIS.

You have a soul, and Cupid has a dart.

CHLORIS.

Diana will defend, or heal my heart.
Nay, fie, what mean you in this open place?
Unhand me, or I swear I'll scratch your face.
Let go for shame; you make me mad for spite;
My mouth's my own; and, if you kiss, I'll bite.

DAPHNIS.

Away with your dissembling female tricks;
What, would you 'scape the fate of all your sex?

CHLORIS.

I swear, I'll keep my maidenhead till death,
And die as pure as queen Elizabeth.

DAPHNIS.

Nay, mum for that; but let me lay thee down;
Better with me, than with some nauseous clown.

CHLORIS.

I'd have you know, if I were so inclined,
I have been woo'd by many a wealthy hind;
But never found a husband to my mind.

DAPHNIS.

But they are absent all; and I am here.

CHLORIS.

The matrimonial yoke is hard to bear,
And marriage is a woeful word to hear.

DAPHNIS.

A scarecrow, set to frighten fools away;
Marriage has joys, and you shall have assay.

CHLORIS.

Sour sauce is often mixed with our delight;
You kick by day more than you kiss by night.

DAPHNIS.

Sham stories all; but say the worst you can,
A very wife fears neither God nor man.

CHLORIS.

But child-birth is, they say, a deadly pain;
It costs at least a month to knit again.

DAPHNIS.

Diana cures the wounds Lucina made;
Your goddess is a midwife by her trade.

CHLORIS.

But I shall spoil my beauty, if I bear.

DAPHNIS.

But Mam and Dad are pretty names to hear.

CHLORIS.

But there's a civil question used of late;
Where lies my jointure, where your own estate?

DAPHNIS.

My flocks, my fields, my woods, my pastures take,
With settlement as good as law can make.

CHLORIS.

Swear then you will not leave me on the common,
But marry me, and make an honest woman.

DAPHNIS.

I swear by Pan, though he wears horns you'll say,
Cudgelled and kicked, I'll not be forced away.

CHLORIS.

I bargain for a wedding-bed at least,
A house, and handsome lodging for a guest.

DAPHNIS.

A house well furnished shall be thine to keep;
And, for a flock-bed, I can sheer my sheep.

CHLORIS.

What tale shall I to my old father tell?

DAPHNIS.

'Twill make him chuckle thou'rt bestowed so well.

CHLORIS.

But, after all, in troth I am to blame
To be so loving, ere I know your name;
A pleasant sounding name's a pretty thing.

DAPHNIS.

Faith, mine's a very pretty name to sing.
They call me Daphnis; Lycidas my sire;
Both sound as well as woman can desire.
Nomæa bore me; farmers in degree;
He a good husband, a good housewife she.

TRANSLATIONS

FROM

LUCRETIUS.

THE

BEGINNING OF

THE FIRST BOOK

OF

LUCRETIUS.

DELIGHT of human kind, and gods above,
Parent of Rome, propitious Queen of Love!
Whose vital power, air, earth, and sea supplies,
And breeds whate'er is born beneath the rolling skies;
For every kind, by thy prolific might,
Springs, and beholds the regions of the light.
Thee, goddess, thee the clouds and tempests fear,
And at thy pleasing presence disappear;
For thee the land in fragrant flowers is drest;
For thee the ocean smiles, and smooths her wavy breast,
And heaven itself with more serene and purer light is blest.
For, when the rising spring adorns the mead,
And a new scene of nature stands displayed,

When teeming buds, and cheerful greens appear,
And western gales unlock the lazy year;
The joyous birds thy welcome first express,
Whose native songs thy genial fire confess;
Then savage beasts bound o'er their slighted food,
Struck with thy darts, and tempt the raging flood.
All nature is thy gift; earth, air, and sea;
Of all that breathes, the various progeny,
Stung with delight, is goaded on by thee.
O'er barren mountains, o'er the flowery plain,
The leafy forest, and the liquid main,
Extends thy uncontrouled and boundless reign;
Through all the living regions dost thou move,
And scatterest, where thou goest, the kindly seeds of love.
Since, then, the race of every living thing
Obeys thy power; since nothing new can spring
Without thy warmth, without thy influence bear,
Or beautiful, or lovesome can appear;
Be thou my aid, my tuneful song inspire,
And kindle with thy own productive fire;
While all thy province, Nature, I survey,
And sing to Memmius an immortal lay
Of heaven and earth, and every where thy wondrous power display:
To Memmius, under thy sweet influence born,
Whom thou with all thy gifts and graces dost adorn.
The rather then assist my Muse and me,
Infusing verses worthy him and thee.
Mean time on land and sea let barbarous discord cease,
And lull the listning world in universal peace.
To thee mankind their soft repose must owe,
For thou alone that blessing canst bestow;
Because the brutal business of the war
Is managed by thy dreadful servant's care;

Who oft retires from fighting fields, to prove
The pleasing pains of thy eternal love;
And, panting on thy breast, supinely lies,
While with thy heavenly form he feeds his famished eyes;
Sucks in with open lips thy balmy breath,
By turns restored to life, and plunged in pleasing death.
There while thy curling limbs about him move,
Involved and fettered in the links of love,
When, wishing all, he nothing can deny,
Thy charms in that auspicious moment try;
With winning eloquence our peace implore,
And quiet to the weary world restore.

THE

BEGINNING OF

THE SECOND BOOK

OF

LUCRETIUS.

'Tis pleasant, safely to behold from shore
The rolling ship, and hear the tempest roar;
Not that another's pain is our delight,
But pains unfelt produce the pleasing sight.
'Tis pleasant also to behold from far
The moving legions mingled in the war;
But much more sweet thy labouring steps to guide
To virtue's heights, with wisdom well supplied,
And all the magazines of learning fortified;
From thence to look below on human kind,
Bewildered in the maze of life, and blind;
To see vain fools ambitiously contend
For wit and power; their last endeavours bend
To outshine each other, waste their time and health
In search of honour, and pursuit of wealth.
O wretched man! in what a mist of life,
Inclosed with dangers and with noisy strife,

He spends his little span ; and overfeeds
His crammed desires, with more than nature needs!
For nature wisely stints our appetite,
And craves no more than undisturbed delight;
Which minds, unmixed with cares and fears, obtain;
A soul serene, a body void of pain.
So little this corporeal frame requires,
So bounded are our natural desires,
That wanting all, and setting pain aside,
With bare privation sense is satisfied.
If golden sconces hang not on the walls,
To light the costly suppers and the balls;
If the proud palace shines not with the state
Of burnished bowls, and of reflected plate;
If well-tuned harps, nor the more pleasing sound
Of voices, from the vaulted roofs rebound;
Yet on the grass, beneath a poplar shade,
By the cool stream, our careless limbs are laid;
With cheaper pleasures innocently blest,
When the warm spring with gaudy flowers is drest.
Nor will the raging fever's fire abate,
With golden canopies and beds of state;
But the poor patient will as soon be sound
On the hard mattress, or the mother ground.
Then since our bodies are not eased the more
By birth, or power, or fortune's wealthy store,
'Tis plain, these useless toys of every kind
As little can relieve the labouring mind ;
Unless we could suppose the dreadful sight
Of marshalled legions moving to the fight,
Could, with their sound and terrible array,
Expel our fears, and drive the thoughts of death away.
But, since the supposition vain appears,
Since clinging cares, and trains of inbred fears,
Are not with sounds to be affrighted thence,
But in the midst of pomp pursue the prince,

Not awed by arms, but in the presence bold,
Without respect to purple, or to gold;
Why should not we these pageantries despise,
Whose worth but in our want of reason lies?
For life is all in wandering errors led;
And just as children are surprised with dread,
And tremble in the dark, so riper years,
Even in broad day-light, are possessed with fears,
And shake at shadows fanciful and vain,
As those which in the breasts of children reign.
These bugbears of the mind, this inward hell,
No rays of outward sunshine can dispel;
But nature and right reason must display
Their beams abroad, and bring the darksome soul to-day.

THE

LATTER PART OF

THE THIRD BOOK

OF

LUCRETIUS.

AGAINST THE FEAR OF DEATH.

What has this bugbear, death, to frighten men,
If souls can die, as well as bodies can?
For, as before our birth we felt no pain,
When Punic arms infested land and main,
When heaven and earth were in confusion hurled,
For the debated empire of the world,
Which awed with dreadful expectation lay,
Sure to be slaves, uncertain who should sway:
So, when our mortal flame shall be disjoined,
The lifeless lump uncoupled from the mind,
From sense of grief and pain we shall be free;
We shall not feel, because we shall not be.
Though earth in seas, and seas in heaven were lost,
We should not move, we only should be tost.
Nay, even suppose, when we have suffered fate,
The soul could feel in her divided state,

What's that to us? for we are only we,
While souls and bodies in one frame agree.
Nay, though our atoms should revolve by chance,
And matter leap into the former dance;
Though time our life and motion could restore,
And make our bodies what they were before;
What gain to us would all this bustle bring?
The new-made man would be another thing.
When once an interrupting pause is made,
That individual being is decayed.
We, who are dead and gone, shall bear no part
In all the pleasures, nor shall feel the smart,
Which to that other mortal shall accrue,
Whom of our matter time shall mould anew.
For backward if you look on that long space
Of ages past, and view the changing face
Of matter, tost, and variously combined
In sundry shapes, 'tis easy for the mind
From thence to infer, that seeds of things have been
In the same order as they now are seen;
Which yet our dark remembrance cannot trace,
Because a pause of life, a gaping space,
Has come betwixt, where memory lies dead,
And all the wandering motions from the sense are fled.
For, whosoe'er shall in misfortunes live,
Must *be*, when those misfortunes shall arrive;
And since the man who *is* not, feels not woe,
(For death exempts him, and wards off the blow,
Which we, the living, only feel and bear,)
What is there left for us in death to fear?
When once that pause of life has come between,
'Tis just the same as we had never been.
And, therefore, if a man bemoan his lot,
That after death his mouldering limbs shall rot,
Or flames, or jaws of beasts devour his mass,
Know, he's an unsincere, unthinking ass.

A secret sting remains within his mind ;
The fool is to his own cast offals kind.
He boasts no sense can after death remain ;
Yet makes himself a part of life again,
As if some other *he* could feel the pain.
If, while we live, this thought molest his head,
What wolf or vulture shall devour me dead ?
He wastes his days in idle grief, nor can
Distinguish 'twixt the body and the man ;
But thinks himself can still himself survive,
And, what when dead he feels not, feels alive.
Then he repines that he was born to die,
Nor knows in death there is no other *he*,
No living *he* remains his grief to vent,
And o'er his senseless carcase to lament.
If, after death, 'tis painful to be torn
By birds, and beasts, then why not so to burn,
Or drenched in floods of honey to be soaked,
Embalmed to be at once preserved and choked ;
Or on an airy mountain's top to lie,
Exposed to cold and heaven's inclemency ;
Or crowded in a tomb, to be opprest
With monumental marble on thy breast ?
But to be snatched from all the household joys,
From thy chaste wife, and thy dear prattling boys,
Whose little arms about thy legs are cast,
And climbing for a kiss prevent their mother's haste,
Inspiring secret pleasure through thy breast ;
Ah ! these shall be no more ; thy friends opprest
Thy care and courage now no more shall free ;
Ah ! wretch, thou criest, ah ! miserable me !
One woeful day sweeps children, friends, and wife,
And all the brittle blessings of my life !
Add one thing more, and all thou say'st is true ;
Thy want and wish of them is vanished too ;
Which, well considered, were a quick relief
To all thy vain imaginary grief :

For thou shalt sleep, and never wake again,
And, quitting life, shall quit thy loving pain.
But we, thy friends, shall all those sorrows find,
Which in forgetful death thou leav'st behind;
No time shall dry our tears, nor drive thee from our mind.
The worst that can befal thee, measured right,
Is a sound slumber, and a long good-night.
Yet thus the fools, that would be thought the wits,
Disturb their mirth with melancholy fits;
When healths go round, and kindly brimmers flow,
Till the fresh garlands on their foreheads glow,
They whine, and cry, let us make haste to live,
Short are the joys that human life can give.
Eternal preachers, that corrupt the draught,
And pall the god, that never thinks, with thought;
Idiots with all that thought, to whom the worst
Of death, is want of drink, and endless thirst,
Or any fond desire as vain as these.
For, even in sleep, the body, wrapt in ease,
Supinely lies, as in the peaceful grave;
And, wanting nothing, nothing can it crave.
Were that sound sleep eternal, it were death;
Yet the first atoms then, the seeds of breath,
Are moving near to sense; we do but shake
And rouse that sense, and straight we are awake.
Then death to us, and death's anxiety,
Is less than nothing, if a less could be;
For then our atoms, which in order lay,
Are scattered from their heap, and puffed away,
And never can return into their place,
When once the pause of life has left an empty space.
And, last, suppose great Nature's voice should call
To thee, or me, or any of us all,—
What dost thou mean, ungrateful wretch, thou vain,
Thou mortal thing, thus idly to complain,

And sigh and sob, that thou shalt be no more?
For, if thy life were pleasant heretofore,
If all the bounteous blessings I could give
Thou hast enjoyed, if thou hast known to live,
And pleasure not leaked through thee like a sieve;
Why dost thou not give thanks as at a plenteous feast,
Crammed to the throat with life, and rise and take thy rest?
But, if my blessings thou hast thrown away,
If undigested joys passed through, and would not stay,
Why dost thou wish for more to squander still?
If life be grown a load, a real ill,
And I would all thy cares and labours end,
Lay down thy burden, fool, and know thy friend.
To please thee, I have emptied all my store;
I can invent, and can supply no more,
But run the round again, the round I ran before.
Suppose thou art not broken yet with years,
Yet still the self-same scene of things appears,
And would be ever, couldst thou ever live;
For life is still but life, there's nothing new to give.
What can we plead against so just a bill?
We stand convicted, and our cause goes ill.
But if a wretch, a man oppressed by fate,
Should beg of nature to prolong his date,
She speaks aloud to him with more disdain,—
Be still, thou martyr fool, thou covetous of pain.
But if an old decrepit sot lament,—
What, thou! she cries, who hast outlived content!
Dost thou complain, who hast enjoyed my store?
But this is still the effect of wishing more.
Unsatisfied with all that nature brings;
Loathing the present, liking absent things;
From hence it comes, thy vain desires, at strife
Within themselves, have tantalized thy life,
And ghastly death appeared before thy sight,
Ere thou hast gorged thy soul and senses with delight.

Now leave those joys, unsuiting to thy age,
To a fresh comer, and resign the stage.—
Is Nature to be blamed if thus she chide?
No, sure; for 'tis her business to provide
Against this ever-changing frame's decay,
New things to come, and old to pass away.
One being, worn, another being makes;
Changed, but not lost; for nature gives and takes:
New matter must be found for things to come,
And these must waste like those, and follow nature's doom.
All things, like thee, have time to rise and rot,
And from each other's ruin are begot:
For life is not confined to him or thee;
'Tis given to all for use, to none for property.
Consider former ages past and gone,
Whose circles ended long ere thine begun,
Then tell me, fool, what part in them thou hast?
Thus may'st thou judge the future by the past.
What horror seest thou in that quiet state,
What bugbear dreams to fright thee after fate?
No ghost, no goblins, that still passage keep;
But all is there serene, in that eternal sleep.
For all the dismal tales, that poets tell,
Are verified on earth, and not in hell.
No Tantalus looks up with fearful eye,
Or dreads the impending rock to crush him from on high;
But fear of chance on earth disturbs our easy hours,
Or vain imagined wrath of vain imagined powers.
No Tityus torn by vultures lies in hell;
Nor could the lobes of his rank liver swell
To that prodigious mass, for their eternal meal;
Not though his monstrous bulk had covered o'er
Nine spreading acres, or nine thousand more;
Not though the globe of earth had been the giant's floor;

Nor in eternal torments could he lie,
Nor could his corpse sufficient food supply.
But he's the Tityus, who, by love opprest,
Or tyrant passion preying on his breast,
And ever anxious thoughts, is robbed of rest.
The Sisyphus is he, whom noise and strife
Seduce from all the soft retreats of life,
To vex the government, disturb the laws;
Drunk with the fumes of popular applause,
He courts the giddy crowd to make him great,
And sweats and toils in vain, to mount the sovereign seat.
For, still to aim at power, and still to fail,
Ever to strive, and never to prevail,
What is it, but, in reason's true account,
To heave the stone against the rising mount?
Which urged, and laboured, and forced up with pain,
Recoils, and rolls impetuous down, and smokes along the plain.
Then, still to treat thy ever-craving mind
With every blessing, and of every kind,
Yet never fill thy ravening appetite,
Though years and seasons vary thy delight,
Yet nothing to be seen of all the store,
But still the wolf within thee barks for more;
This is the fable's moral, which they tell
Of fifty foolish virgins damned in hell
To leaky vessels, which the liquor spill;
To vessels of their sex, which none could ever fill.
As for the dog, the furies, and their snakes,
The gloomy caverns, and the burning lakes,
And all the vain infernal trumpery,
They neither are, nor were, nor e'er can be.
But here, on earth, the guilty have in view
The mighty pains to mighty mischiefs due;
Racks, prisons, poisons, the Tarpeian rock,
Stripes, hangmen, pitch, and suffocating smoke;

And last, and most, if these were cast behind,
The avenging horror of a conscious mind;
Whose deadly fear anticipates the blow,
And sees no end of punishment and woe,
But looks for more, at the last gasp of breath;
This makes an hell on earth, and life a death.
Meantime, when thoughts of death disturb thy head,
Consider, Ancus, great and good, is dead;
Ancus, thy better far, was born to die,
And thou, dost thou bewail mortality?
So many monarchs with their mighty state,
Who ruled the world, were over-ruled by fate.
That haughty king, who lorded o'er the main,
And whose stupendous bridge did the wild waves restrain,
(In vain they foamed, in vain they threatened wreck,
While his proud legions marched upon their back,)
Him death, a greater monarch, overcame;
Nor spared his guards the more, for their immortal name.
The Roman chief, the Carthaginian dread,
Scipio, the thunder-bolt of war, is dead,
And, like a common slave, by fate in triumph led.
The founders of invented arts are lost,
And wits, who made eternity their boast.
Where now is Homer, who possessed the throne?
The immortal work remains, the immortal author's gone.
Democritus, perceiving age invade,
His body weakened, and his mind decayed,
Obeyed the summons with a cheerful face;
Made haste to welcome death, and met him half the race.
That stroke even Epicurus could not bar,
Though he in wit surpassed mankind, as far
As does the mid-day sun the mid-night star.

And thou, dost thou disdain to yield thy breath,
Whose very life is little more than death?
More than one half by lazy sleep possest;
And when awake, thy soul but nods at best,
Day-dreams and sickly thoughts revolving in thy breast
Eternal troubles haunt thy anxious mind,
Whose cause and cure thou never hop'st to find;
But still uncertain, with thyself at strife,
Thou wanderest in the labyrinth of life.
O, if the foolish race of man, who find
A weight of cares still pressing on their mind,
Could find as well the cause of this unrest,
And all this burden lodged within the breast;
Sure they would change their course, nor live as now,
Uncertain what to wish, or what to vow.
Uneasy both in country and in town,
They search a place to lay their burden down.
One, restless in his palace, walks abroad,
And vainly thinks to leave behind the load,
But strait returns; for he's as restless there,
And finds there's no relief in open air.
Another to his villa would retire,
And spurs as hard as if it were on fire;
No sooner entered at his country door,
But he begins to stretch, and yawn, and snore,
Or seeks the city, which he left before.
Thus every man o'erworks his weary will,
To shun himself, and to shake off his ill;
The shaking fit returns, and hangs upon him still.
No prospect of repose, nor hope of ease,
The wretch is ignorant of his disease;
Which, known, would all his fruitless trouble spare,
For he would know the world not worth his care:
Then would he search more deeply for the cause,
And study nature well, and nature's laws;

For in this moment lies not the debate,
But on our future, fixed, eternal state;
That never-changing state, which all must keep,
Whom death has doomed to everlasting sleep.
Why are we then so fond of mortal life,
Beset with dangers, and maintained with strife?
A life, which all our care can never save;
One fate attends us, and one common grave.
Besides, we tread but a perpetual round;
We ne'er strike out, but beat the former ground,
And the same maukish joys in the same track are found.
For still we think an absent blessing best,
Which cloys, and is no blessing when possest;
A new arising wish expels it from the breast.
The feverish thirst of life increases still;
We call for more and more, and never have our fill;
Yet know not what to-morrow we shall try,
What dregs of life in the last draught may lie.
Nor, by the longest life we can attain,
One moment from the length of death we gain;
For all behind belongs to his eternal reign.
When once the fates have cut the mortal thread,
The man as much to all intents is dead,
Who dies to-day, and will as long be so,
As he who died a thousand years ago.

Perhaps, he watches close her amorous eyes,
And in the act of ogling does surprise,
And thinks he sees upon her cheeks the while
The dimpled tracks of some foregoing smile;
His raging pulse beats thick, and his pent spirits boil.
This is the product e'en of prosperous love;
Think then what pangs disastrous passions prove;
Innumerable ills; disdain, despair,
With all the meagre family of care.
Thus, as I said, 'tis better to prevent,
Than flatter the disease, and late repent;
Because to shun the allurement is not hard
To minds resolved, forewarned, and well prepared;
But wonderous difficult, when once beset,
To struggle through the straits, and break the involving net.
Yet, thus ensnared, thy freedom thou may'st gain,
If, like a fool, thou dost not hug thy chain;
If not to ruin obstinately blind,
And wilfully endeavouring not to find
Her plain defects of body and of mind.
For thus the Bedlam train of lovers use
To enhance the value, and the faults excuse;
And therefore 'tis no wonder if we see
They doat on dowdies and deformity.
Even what they cannot praise, they will not blame,
But veil with some extenuating name.
The sallow skin is for the swarthy put,
And love can make a slattern of a slut;
If cat-eyed, then a Pallas is their love;
If freckled, she's a party-coloured dove;
If little, then she's life and soul all o'er;
An Amazon, the large two-handed whore.
She stammers; oh what grace in lisping lies!
If she says nothing, to be sure she's wise.

If shrill, and with a voice to drown a quire,
Sharp-witted she must be, and full of fire;
The lean, consumptive wench, with coughs decayed,
Is called a pretty, tight, and slender maid;
The o'er-grown, a goodly Ceres is exprest,
A bed-fellow for Bacchus at the least;
Flat-nose the name of Satyr never misses,
And hanging blobber lips but pout for kisses.
The task were endless all the rest to trace;
Yet grant she were a Venus for her face
And shape, yet others equal beauty share,
And time was you could live without the fair;
She does no more, in that for which you woo,
Than homelier women full as well can do.
Besides, she daubs, and stinks so much of paint,
Her own attendants cannot bear the scent,
But laugh behind, and bite their lips to hold.
Meantime, excluded, and exposed to cold,
The whining lover stands before the gates,
And there with humble adoration waits;
Crowning with flowers the threshold and the floor,
And printing kisses on the obdurate door;
Who, if admitted in that nick of time,
If some unsavoury whiff betray the crime,
Invents a quarrel straight, if there be none,
Or makes some faint excuses to be gone;
And calls himself a doating fool to serve,
Ascribing more than woman can deserve.
Which well they understand, like cunning queans,
And hide their nastiness behind the scenes,
From him they have allured, and would retain;
But to a piercing eye 'tis all in vain:
For common sense brings all their cheats to view,
And the false light discovers by the true;
Which a wise harlot owns, and hopes to find
A pardon for defects, that run through all the kind.

Nor always do they feign the sweets of love,
When round the panting youth their pliant limbs
they move,
And cling, and heave, and moisten every kiss;
They often share, and more than share the bliss:
From every part, even to their inmost soul,
They feel the trickling joys, and run with vigour to
the goal.
Stirred with the same impetuous desire,
Birds, beasts, and herds, and mares, their males re-
quire;
Because the throbbing nature in their veins
Provokes them to assuage their kindly pains.
The lusty leap the expecting female stands,
By mutual heat compelled to mutual bands.
Thus dogs with lolling tongues by love are tied,
Nor shouting boys nor blows their union can divide;
At either end they strive the link to loose,
In vain, for stronger Venus holds the noose;
Which never would those wretched lovers do,
But that the common heats of love they know;
The pleasure therefore must be shared in common
too:
And when the woman's more prevailing juice
Sucks in the man's, the mixture will produce
The mother's likeness; when the man prevails,
His own resemblance in the seed he seals.
But when we see the new-begotten race
Reflect the features of each parent's face,
Then of the father's and the mother's blood
The justly tempered seed is understood;
When both conspire, with equal ardour bent,
From every limb the due proportion sent,
When neither party foils, when neither foiled,
This gives the splendid features of the child.
Sometimes the boy the grandsire's image bears;
Sometimes the more remote progenitor he shares;

Because the genial atoms of the seed
Lie long concealed ere they exert the breed;
And, after sundry ages past, produce
The tardy likeness of the latent juice.
Hence, families such different figures take,
And represent their ancestors in face, and hair, and make;
Because of the same seed, the voice, and hair,
And shape, and face, and other members are,
And the same antique mould the likeness does prepare.
Thus, oft the father's likeness does prevail
In females, and the mother's in the male;
For, since the seed is of a double kind,
From that, where we the most resemblance find,
We may conclude the strongest tincture sent,
And that was in conception prevalent.
Nor can the vain decrees of powers above
Deny production to the act of love,
Or hinder fathers of that happy name,
Or with a barren womb the matron shame;
As many think, who stain with victims blood
The mournful altars, and with incense load,
To bless the showery seed with future life,
And to impregnate the well-laboured wife.
In vain they weary heaven with prayer, or fly
To oracles, or magic numbers try;
For barrenness of sexes will proceed
Either from too condensed, or watery, seed:
The watery juice too soon dissolves away,
And in the parts projected will not stay;
The too condensed, unsouled, unwieldy mass,
Drops short, nor carries to the destined place;
Nor pierces to the parts, nor, though injected home,
Will mingle with the kindly moisture of the womb.
For nuptials are unlike in their success;
Some men with fruitful seed some women bless,

And from some men some women fruitful are,
Just as their constitutions join or jar:
And many seeming barren wives have been,
Who after, matched with more prolific men,
Have filled a family with prattling boys;
And many, not supplied at home with joys,
Have found a friend abroad to ease their smart,
And to perform the sapless husband's part.
So much it does import, that seed with seed
Should of the kindly mixture make the breed;
And thick with thin, and thin with thick should join,
So to produce and propagate the line.
Of such concernment too is drink and food,
To incrassate, or attenuate the blood.
Of like importance is the posture too,
In which the genial feat of love we do;
For, as the females of the four-foot kind
Receive the leapings of their males behind,
So the good wives, with loins uplifted high,
And leaning on their hands, the fruitful stroke may try:
For in that posture will they best conceive;
Not when, supinely laid, they frisk and heave;
For active motions only break the blow,
And more of strumpets than the wives they show,
When, answering stroke with stroke, the mingled liquors flow.
Endearments eager, and too brisk a bound,
Throw off the plow-share from the furrowed ground;
But common harlots in conjunction heave,
Because 'tis less their business to conceive,
Than to delight, and to provoke the deed;
A trick which honest wives but little need.
Nor is it from the gods, or Cupid's dart,
That many a homely woman takes the heart,
But wives well-humoured, dutiful, and chaste,
And clean, will hold their wandering husbands fast;
Such are the links of love, and such a love will last.

For what remains, long habitude, and use,
Will kindness in domestic bands produce;
For custom will a strong impression leave.
Hard bodies, which the lightest stroke receive,
In length of time will moulder and decay,
And stones with drops of rain are washed away.

FROM

THE FIFTH BOOK

OF

LUCRETIUS.

Tum porrò puer, &c.

Thus, like a sailor by a tempest hurled
Ashore, the babe is shipwrecked on the world.
Naked he lies, and ready to expire,
Helpless of all that human wants require;
Exposed upon unhospitable earth,
From the first moment of his hapless birth.
Straight with foreboding cries he fills the room,
Too true presages of his future doom.
But flocks and herds, and every savage beast,
By more indulgent nature are increased:
They want no rattles for their froward mood,
Nor nurse to reconcile them to their food,
With broken words; nor winter blasts they fear,
Nor change their habits with the changing year;
Nor, for their safety, citadels prepare,
Nor forge the wicked instruments of war;
Unlaboured earth her bounteous treasure grants,
And Nature's lavish hand supplies their common wants.

TRANSLATIONS

FROM

HORACE.

THE

THIRD ODE OF THE FIRST BOOK

OF

HORACE.

INSCRIBED TO

THE EARL OF ROSCOMMON,

ON HIS INTENDED VOYAGE TO IRELAND. *

So may the auspicious queen of love,
And the twin stars, the seed of Jove,
And he who rules the raging wind,
To thee, O sacred ship, be kind;

* Wentworth Dillon, Earl of Roscommon, an elegant poet and accomplished nobleman, was created captain of the band of pensioners after the Restoration, and made a considerable figure at the court of Charles II. But, having injured his fortune by gaming, and being engaged in a lawsuit with the Lord Privy Seal concerning a considerable part of his estate, he found himself obliged to retire to Ireland, and resigned his post at the English court. After having resided some years in that kingdom, where he enjoyed the post of captain of the guards to the Duke of Ormond, he returned to England, where he died in 1684. Besides the ode which follows, there are several traces through Dryden's works of his intimacy with Roscommon.

And gentle breezes fill thy sails,
Supplying soft Etesian gales;
As thou, to whom the Muse commends
The best of poets and of friends,
Dost thy committed pledge restore,
And land him safely on the shore;
And save the better part of me,
From perishing with him at sea.
Sure he, who first the passage tried,
In hardened oak his heart did hide,
And ribs of iron armed his side;
Or his at least, in hollow wood,
Who tempted first the briny flood;
Nor feared the winds' contending roar,
Nor billows beating on the shore,
Nor Hyades portending rain,
Nor all the tyrants of the main.
What form of death could him affright,
Who unconcerned, with stedfast sight,
Could view the surges mounting steep,
And monsters rolling in the deep!
Could through the ranks of ruin go,
With storms above, and rocks below!
In vain did Nature's wise command
Divide the waters from the land,
If daring ships and men prophane
Invade the inviolable main;
The eternal fences over-leap,
And pass at will the boundless deep.
No toil, no hardship, can restrain
Ambitious man, inured to pain;
The more confined, the more he tries,
And at forbidden quarry flies.
Thus bold Prometheus did aspire,
And stole from Heaven the seeds of fire:
A train of ills, a ghastly crew,
The robber's blazing track pursue;

Fierce famine with her meagre face,
And fevers of the fiery race,
In swarms the offending wretch surround,
All brooding on the blasted ground;
And limping death, lashed on by fate,
Comes up to shorten half our date.
This made not Dædalus beware,
With borrowed wings to sail in air;
To hell Alcides forced his way,
Plunged through the lake, and snatched the prey.
Nay, scarce the gods, or heavenly climes,
Are safe from our audacious crimes;
We reach at Jove's imperial crown,
And pull the unwilling thunder down.

THE

NINTH ODE OF THE FIRST BOOK

OF

HORACE.

I.

Behold yon mountain's hoary height,
Made higher with new mounts of snow;
Again behold the winter's weight
Oppress the labouring woods below;
And streams, with icy fetters bound,
Benumbed and crampt to solid ground.

II.

With well-heaped logs dissolve the cold,
And feed the genial hearth with fires;
Produce the wine, that makes us bold,
And sprightly wit and love inspires:
For what hereafter shall betide,
God, if 'tis worth his care, provide.

III.

Let him alone, with what he made,
To toss and turn the world below;
At his command the storms invade,
The winds by his commission blow;
Till with a nod he bids them cease,
And then the calm returns, and all is peace.

IV.

To-morrow and her works defy,
Lay hold upon the present hour,
And snatch the pleasures passing by,
To put them out of fortune's power:
Nor love, nor love's delights, disdain;
Whate'er thou get'st to-day, is gain.

V.

Secure those golden early joys,
That youth unsoured with sorrow bears,
Ere withering time the taste destroys,
With sickness and unwieldy years.
For active sports, for pleasing rest,
This is the time to be possest;
The best is but in season best.

VI.

The appointed hour of promised bliss,
The pleasing whisper in the dark,
The half unwilling willing kiss,
The laugh that guides thee to the mark;
When the kind nymph would coyness feign,
And hides but to be found again;
These, these are joys the gods for youth ordain.

THE

TWENTY-NINTH ODE OF THE FIRST BOOK

OF

HORACE.

PARAPHRASED IN PINDARIC VERSE,

AND INSCRIBED TO THE RIGHT HON. LAURENCE,

EARL OF ROCHESTER.

I.

DESCENDED of an ancient line,
That long the Tuscan sceptre swayed,
Make haste to meet the generous wine,
Whose piercing is for thee delayed:
The rosy wreath is ready made,
And artful hands prepare
The fragrant Syrian oil, that shall perfume thy hair.

II.

When the wine sparkles from afar,
And the well-natured friend cries, "Come away!"
Make haste, and leave thy business and thy care,
No mortal interest can be worth thy stay.

III.

Leave for a while thy costly country seat,
And, to be great indeed, forget
The nauseous pleasures of the great:
Make haste and come;
Come, and forsake thy cloying store;
Thy turret, that surveys, from high,
The smoke, and wealth, and noise of Rome,
And all the busy pageantry
That wise men scorn, and fools adore;
Come, give thy soul a loose, and taste the pleasures of the poor.

IV.

Sometimes 'tis grateful to the rich to try
A short vicissitude, and fit of poverty:
A savoury dish, a homely treat,
Where all is plain, where all is neat,
Without the stately spacious room,
The Persian carpet, or the Tyrian loom,
Clear up the cloudy foreheads of the great.

V.

The sun is in the Lion mounted high;
The Syrian star
Barks from afar,
And with his sultry breath infects the sky;
The ground below is parched, the heavens above us fry:
The shepherd drives his fainting flock
Beneath the covert of a rock,
And seeks refreshing rivulets nigh:
The Sylvans to their shades retire,
Those very shades and streams new shades and streams require,
And want a cooling breeze of wind to fan the raging fire.

VI.

Thou, what befits the new Lord Mayor,*
And what the city factions dare,
And what the Gallic arms will do,
And what the quiver-bearing foe,
Art anxiously inquisitive to know:
But God has, wisely, hid from human sight
The dark decrees of future fate,
And sown their seeds in depth of night;
He laughs at all the giddy turns of state,
When mortals search too soon, and fear too late.

VII.

Enjoy the present smiling hour,
And put it out of fortune's power;
The tide of business, like the running stream,
Is sometimes high, and sometimes low,
A quiet ebb, or a tempestuous flow,
And always in extreme.
Now with a noiseless gentle course
It keeps within the middle bed;
Anon it lifts aloft the head,
And bears down all before it with impetuous force:
And trunks of trees come rolling down,
Sheep and their folds together drown;
Both house and homested into seas are borne,
And rocks are from their old foundations torn,
And woods, made thin with winds, their scattered honours mourn.

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* The poem seems to have been written during the political conflicts in the city of London.

VIII.

Happy the man, and happy he alone,
He, who can call to-day his own;
He who, secure within, can say,
To-morrow do thy worst, for I have lived to-day:
Be fair, or foul, or rain, or shine,
The joys I have possessed, in spite of fate, are mine;
Not heaven itself upon the past has power,
But what has been, has been, and I have had my hour.

IX.

Fortune, that with malicious joy
Does man, her slave, oppress,
Proud of her office to destroy,
Is seldom pleased to bless:
Still various, and unconstant still,
But with an inclination to be ill,
Promotes, degrades, delights in strife,
And make a lottery of life.
I can enjoy her while she's kind;
But when she dances in the wind,
And shakes the wings, and will not stay,
I puff the prostitute away:
The little or the much she gave, is quietly resigned;
Content with poverty my soul I arm,
And virtue, though in rags, will keep me warm.

X.

What is't to me,
Who never sail in her unfaithful sea,
If storms arise, and clouds grow black,
If the mast split, and threaten wreck?
Then let the greedy merchant fear
For his ill-gotten gain;
And pray to gods that will not hear,
While the debating winds and billows bear
His wealth into the main.

For me, secure from fortune's blows,
Secure of what I cannot lose,
In my small pinnace I can sail,
Contemning all the blustering roar;
And running with a merry gale,
With friendly stars my safety seek,
Within some little winding creek,
And see the storm ashore.

THE

SECOND EPODE

OF

HORACE.

How happy in his low degree,
How rich in humble poverty, is he,
Who leads a quiet country life,
Discharged of business, void of strife,
And from the griping scrivener free!
Thus, ere the seeds of vice were sown,
  Lived men in better ages born,
Who ploughed, with oxen of their own,
  Their small paternal field of corn.
Nor trumpets summon him to war,
  Nor drums disturb his morning sleep,
Nor knows he merchants' gainful care,
  Nor fears the dangers of the deep.
The clamours of contentious law,
  And court and state, he wisely shuns,
Nor bribed with hopes, nor dared with awe,
  To servile salutations runs;

But either to the clasping vine
Does the supporting poplar wed,
Or with his pruning-hook disjoin
Unbearing branches from their head,
And grafts more happy in their stead:
Or, climbing to a hilly steep,
He views his herds in vales afar,
Or sheers his overburthened sheep,
Or mead for cooling drink prepares,
Or virgin honey in the jars.
Or in the now declining year,
When bounteous autumn rears his head,
He joys to pull the ripened pear,
And clustering grapes with purple spread.
The fairest of his fruit he serves,
Priapus, thy rewards:
Sylvanus too his part deserves,
Whose care the fences guards.
Sometimes beneath an ancient oak,
Or on the matted grass he lies;
No god of sleep he need invoke;
The stream, that o'er the pebbles flies,
With gentle slumber crowns his eyes.
The wind, that whistles through the sprays,
Maintains the concert of the song;
And hidden birds, with native lays,
The golden sleep prolong.
But when the blast of winter blows,
And hoary frost inverts the year,
Into the naked woods he goes,
And seeks the tusky boar to rear,
With well-mouthed hounds and pointed spear:
Or spreads his subtle nets from sight
With twinkling glasses, to betray
The larks that in the meshes light,
Or makes the fearful hare his prey.

Amidst his harmless easy joys
No anxious care invades his health,
Nor love his peace of mind destroys,
Nor wicked avarice of wealth.
But if a chaste and pleasing wife,
To ease the business of his life,
Divides with him his household care,
Such as the Sabine matrons were,
Such as the swift Apulian's bride,
Sun-burnt and swarthy though she be,
Will fire for winter nights provide,
And without noise will oversee
His children and his family,
And order all things till he come,
Sweaty and overlaboured, home;
If she in pens his flocks will fold,
And then produce her dairy store,
With wine to drive away the cold,
And unbought dainties of the poor;
Not oysters of the Lucrine lake
My sober appetite would wish,
Nor turbot, or the foreign fish
That rolling tempests overtake,
And hither waft the costly dish.
Not heath-pout, or the rarer bird,
Which Phasis or Ionia yields,
More pleasing morsels would afford
Than the fat olives of my fields;
Than shards or mallows for the pot,
That keep the loosened body sound,
Or than the lamb, that falls by lot
To the just guardian of my ground.
Amidst these feasts of happy swains,
The jolly shepherd smiles to see
His flock returning from the plains;
The farmer is as pleased as he,

To view his oxen sweating smoke;
Hear on their necks the loosened yoke;
To look upon his menial crew,
  That sit around his cheerful hearth,
And bodies spent in toil renew
  With wholesome food and country mirth.—

This Morecraft said within himself:
  Resolved to leave the wicked town,
  And live retired upon his own,
He called his money in:
  But the prevailing love of pelf
  Soon split him on the former shelf,—
He put it out again.

TRANSLATIONS

FROM

HOMER.

THE

FIRST BOOK

OF

HOMER'S ILIAD.

THE ARGUMENT.

Chryses, priest of Apollo, brings presents to the Grecian princes, to ransom his daughter Chryseis, who was prisoner in the fleet. Agamemnon, the general, whose captive and mistress the young lady was, refuses to deliver her, threatens the venerable old man, and dismisses him with contumely. The priest craves vengeance of his God, who sends a plague among the Greeks; which occasions Achilles, their great champion, to summon a council of the chief officers: he encourages Calchas, the high priest and prophet, to tell the reason, why the Gods were so much incensed against them. Calchas is fearful of provoking Agamemnon, till Achilles engages to protect him: then, emboldened by the hero, he accuses the general as the cause of all, by detaining the fair captive, and refusing the presents offered for her ransom. By this proceeding, Agamemnon is obliged, against his will, to restore Chryseis, with gifts, that he might appease the wrath of Phœbus; but, at the same time, to revenge himself on Achilles, sends to seize his slave Brisеis. Achilles, thus affronted, complains to his mother Thetis; and begs her to revenge his injury, not only on the general, but on all the army, by giving victory to the Trojans, till the ungrateful king became sensible of his injustice. At the same time, he retires from the camp into his ships, and withdraws his aid

from his countrymen. Thetis prefers her son's petition to Jupiter, who grants her suit. Juno suspects her errand, and quarrels with her husband for his grant; till Vulcan reconciles his parents with a bowl of nectar, and sends them peaceably to bed.

The wrath of Peleus' son, O muse, resound,
Whose dire effects the Grecian army found,
And many a hero, king, and hardy knight,
Were sent, in early youth, to shades of night:
Their limbs a prey to dogs and vultures made;
So was the sovereign will of Jove obeyed:
From that ill-omened hour when strife begun,
Betwixt Atrides great, and Thetis' godlike son.
What power provoked, and for what cause, relate,
Sowed in their breasts the seeds of stern debate:
Jove's and Latona's son his wrath expressed,
In vengeance of his violated priest,
Against the king of men; who, swoln with pride,
Refused his presents, and his prayers denied.
For this the God a swift contagion spread
Amid the camp, where heaps on heaps lay dead.
For venerable Chryses came to buy,
With gold and gifts of price, his daughter's liberty.
Suppliant before the Grecian chiefs he stood,
Awful, and armed with ensigns of his God:
Bare was his hoary head; one holy hand
Held forth his laurel crown, and one his sceptre of command.
His suit was common; but above the rest,
To both the brother-princes thus addressed:—
Ye sons of Atreus, and ye Grecian powers,
So may the Gods, who dwell in heavenly bowers,
Succeed your siege, accord the vows you make,
And give you Troy's imperial town to take;
So, by their happy conduct, may you come
With conquest back to your sweet native home;

As you receive the ransom which I bring,
Respecting Jove, and the far-shooting king,
And break my daughter's bonds, at my desire,
And glad with her return her grieving sire.—
With shouts of loud acclaim the Greeks decree
To take the gifts, to set the damsel free.
The king of men alone with fury burned,
And haughty, these opprobrious words returned:—
Hence, holy dotard! and avoid my sight,
Ere evil intercept thy tardy flight;
Nor dare to tread this interdicted strand,
Lest not that idle sceptre in thy hand,
Nor thy god's crown, my vowed revenge withstand.
Hence, on thy life! the captive maid is mine,
Whom not for price or prayers I will resign;
Mine she shall be, till creeping age and time
Her bloom have withered, and consumed her prime.
Till then my royal bed she shall attend,
And, having first adorned it, late ascend;
This, for the night; by day, the web and loom,
And homely household-task, shall be her doom,
Far from thy loved embrace, and her sweet native home.—
He said: the helpless priest replied no more,
But sped his steps along the hoarse-resounding shore.
Silent he fled; secure at length he stood,
Devoutly cursed his foes, and thus invoked his God:—
O source of sacred light, attend my prayer,
God with the silver bow, and golden hair,
Whom Chrysa, Cilla, Tenedos obeys,
And whose broad eye their happy soil surveys!
If, Smintheus, I have poured before thy shrine
The blood of oxen, goats, and ruddy wine,
And larded thighs on loaded altars laid,
Hear, and my just revenge propitious aid!
Pierce the proud Greeks, and with thy shafts attest
How much thy power is injured in thy priest.—

He prayed; and Phœbus, hearing, urged his flight,
With fury kindled, from Olympus' height;
His quiver o'er his ample shoulders threw,
His bow twanged, and his arrows rattled as they flew.
Black as a stormy night, he ranged around
The tents, and compassed the devoted ground;
Then with full force his deadly bow he bent,
And feathered fates among the mules and sumpters sent,
The essay of rage; on faithful dogs the next;
And last, in human hearts his arrows fixed.
The God nine days the Greeks at rovers killed,
Nine days the camp with funeral fires was filled;
The tenth, Achilles, by the queen's command,
Who bears heaven's awful sceptre in her hand,
A council summoned; for the goddess grieved
Her favoured host should perish unrelieved.
The kings, assembled, soon their chief inclose;
Then from his seat the goddess-born arose,
And thus undaunted spoke:—What now remains,
But that once more we tempt the watery plains,
And, wandering homeward, seek our safety hence,
In flight at least, if we can find defence?
Such woes at once encompass us about,
The plague within the camp, the sword without.
Consult, O king, the prophets of the event;
And whence these ills, and what the God's intent,
Let them by dreams explore, for dreams from Jove are sent.
What want of offered victims, what offence
In fact committed could the Sun incense,
To deal his deadly shafts? What may remove
His settled hate, and reconcile his love?
That he may look propitious on our toils,
And hungry graves no more be glutted with our spoils.
Thus to the king of men the hero spoke,
Then Calchas the desired occasion took;

Calchas, the sacred seer, who had in view
Things present and the past, and things to come foreknew;
Supreme of augurs, who, by Phœbus taught,
The Grecian powers to Troy's destruction brought.
Skilled in the secret causes of their woes,
The reverend priest in graceful act arose,
And thus bespoke Pelides:—Care of Jove,
Favoured of all the immortal powers above,
Wouldst thou the seeds deep sown of mischief know,
And why, provoked, Apollo bends his bow,
Plight first thy faith, inviolably true,
To save me from those ills that may ensue.
For I shall tell ungrateful truths to those,
Whose boundless powers of life and death dispose;
And sovereigns, ever jealous of their state,
Forgive not those whom once they mark for hate:
Even though the offence they seemingly digest,
Revenge, like embers raked within their breast,
Bursts forth in flames, whose unresisted power
Will seize the unwary wretch, and soon devour.
Such, and no less, is he, on whom depends
The sum of things, and whom my tongue of force offends.
Secure me then from his foreseen intent,
That what his wrath may doom, thy valour may prevent.—
To this the stern Achilles made reply:—
Be bold, (and on my plighted faith rely,)
To speak what Phœbus has inspired thy soul
For common good, and speak without controul.
His godhead I invoke; by him I swear,
That while my nostrils draw this vital air,
None shall presume to violate those bands,
Or touch thy person with unhallowed hands;
Even not the king of men, that all commands.

At this, resuming heart, the prophet said :—
Nor hecatomb unslain, nor vows unpaid,
On Greeks accursed this dire contagion bring,
Or call for vengeance from the bowyer king ;
But he the tyrant, whom none dares resist,
Affronts the godhead in his injured priest ;
He keeps the damsel captive in his chain,
And presents are refused, and prayers preferred in vain.
For this the avenging power employs his darts,
And empties all his quiver in our hearts ;
Thus will persist, relentless in his ire,
Till the fair slave be rendered to her sire,
And ransom-free restored to his abode,
With sacrifice to reconcile the God ;
Then he, perhaps, atoned by prayer, may cease
His vengeance justly vowed, and give the peace.—
Thus having said, he sate :—Thus answered then,
Upstarting from his throne, the king of men,
His breast with fury filled, his eyes with fire,
Which rolling round, he shot in sparkles on the sire :
Augur of ill, whose tongue was never found
Without a priestly curse, or boding sound !
For not one blessed event foretold to me
Passed through that mouth, or passed unwillingly ;
And now thou dost with lies the throne invade,
By practice hardened in thy slandering trade ;
Obtending heaven, for whate'er ills befall,
And sputtering under specious names thy gall.
Now Phœbus is provoked, his rites and laws
Are in his priest profaned, and I the cause ;
Since I detain a slave, my sovereign prize,
And sacred gold, your idol-god, despise.
I love her well ; and well her merits claim,
To stand preferred before my Grecian dame :
Not Clytemnestra's self in beauty's bloom
More charmed, or better plied the various loom :

Mine is the maid, and brought in happy hour,
With every household-grace adorned, to bless my nuptial bower.
Yet shall she be restored, since public good
For private interest ought not to be withstood,
To save the effusion of my people's blood.]
But right requires, if I resign my own,
I should not suffer for your sakes alone;
Alone excluded from the prize I gained,
And by your common suffrage have obtained.
The slave without a ransom shall be sent,
It rests for you to make the equivalent.
To this the fierce Thessalian prince replied:—
O first in power, but passing all in pride,
Griping, and still tenacious of thy hold,
Would'st thou the Grecian chiefs, though largely souled,
Should give the prizes they had gained before,
And with their loss thy sacrilege restore?
Whate'er by force of arms the soldier got,
Is each his own, by dividend of lot;
Which to resume were both unjust and base,
Not to be borne but by a servile race.
But this we can; if Saturn's son bestows
The sack of Troy, which he by promise owes,
Then shall the conquering Greeks thy loss restore,
And with large interest make the advantage more.
To this Atrides answered:—Though thy boast
Assumes the foremost name of all our host,
Pretend not, mighty man, that what is mine,
Controuled by thee, I tamely should resign.
Shall I release the prize I gained by right,
In taken towns, and many a bloody fight,
While thou detain'st Briseis in thy bands,
By priestly glossing on the God's commands?
Resolve on this, (a short alternative,)
Quit mine, or, in exchange, another give;

Else I, assure thy soul, by sovereign right
Will seize thy captive in thy own despite;
Or from stout Ajax, or Ulysses, bear
What other prize my fancy shall prefer:
Then softly murmur, or aloud complain,
Rage as you please, you shall resist in vain.
But more of this, in proper time and place;
To things of greater moment let us pass.
A ship to sail the sacred seas prepare,
Proud in her trim, and put on board the fair,
With sacrifice and gifts, and all the pomp of prayer.
The crew well chosen, the command shall be
In Ajax; or if other I decree,
In Creta's king, or Ithacus, or, if I please, in thee:
Most fit thyself to see performed the intent,
For which my prisoner from my sight is sent,
(Thanks to thy pious care,) that Phœbus may relent.
At this Achilles rolled his furious eyes,
Fixed on the king askant, and thus replies:—
O, impudent, regardful of thy own,
Whose thoughts are centered on thyself alone,
Advanced to sovereign sway for better ends
Than thus like abject slaves to treat thy friends!
What Greek is he, that, urged by thy command,
Against the Trojan troops will lift his hand?
Not I; nor such enforced respect I owe,
Nor Pergamus I hate, nor Priam is my foe.
What wrong from Troy remote could I sustain,
To leave my fruitful soil and happy reign,
And plough the surges of the stormy main?
Thee, frontless man, we followed from afar,
Thy instruments of death, and tools of war.
Thine is the triumph; ours the toil alone;
We bear thee on our backs, and mount thee on the throne.

For thee we fall in fight; for thee redress
Thy baffled * brother,—not the wrongs of Greece.
And now thou threaten'st, with unjust decree,
To punish thy affronting heaven on me;
To seize the prize which I so dearly bought,
By common suffrage given, confirmed by lot.
Mean match to thine; for, still above the rest,
Thy hooked rapacious hands usurp the best;
Though mine are first in fight, to force the prey,
And last sustain the labours of the day.
Nor grudge I thee the much the Grecians give,
Nor murmuring take the little I receive;
Yet even this little, thou, who wouldst ingross
The whole, insatiate, enviest as thy loss.
Know, then, for Phthia fixed is my return;
Better at home my ill-paid pains to mourn,
Than from an equal here sustain the public scorn.
The king, whose brows with shining gold were bound,
Who saw his throne with sceptered slaves encompassed round,
Thus answered stern:—Go, at thy pleasure, go;
We need not such a friend, nor fear we such a foe.
There will not want to follow me in fight;
Jove will assist, and Jove assert my right:
But thou of all the kings (his care below)
Art least at my command, and most my foe.
Debates, dissensions, uproars are thy joy;
Provoked without offence, and practised to destroy.
Strength is of brutes, and not thy boast alone;
At least 'tis lent from heaven, and not thy own.
Fly then, ill-mannered, to thy native land,
And there thy ant-born Myrmidons command.

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* Baffled is here used for insulted.

But mark this menace; since I must resign
My black-eyed maid, to please the Powers divine;
A well-rigged vessel in the port attends,
Manned at my charge, commanded by my friends;
The ship shall waft her to her wished abode,
Full fraught with holy bribes to the far-shooting God.
This thus dispatched, I owe myself the care,
My fame and injured honour to repair;
From thy own tent, proud man, in thy despite,
This hand shall ravish thy pretended right.
Briseis shall be mine, and thou shalt see
What odds of awful power I have on thee,
That others at thy cost may learn the difference of degree.—
At this the impatient hero sourly smiled;
His heart impetuous in his bosom boiled,
And, jostled by two tides of equal sway,
Stood for a while suspended in his way.
Betwixt his reason and his rage untamed,
One whispered soft, and one aloud reclaimed;
That only counselled to the safer side,
This to the sword his ready hand applied.
Unpunished to support the affront was hard,
Nor easy was the attempt to force the guard;
But soon the thirst of vengeance fired his blood,
Half shone his faulchion, and half sheathed it stood.
In that nice moment, Pallas, from above,
Commissioned by the imperial wife of Jove,
Descended swift; (the white-armed Queen was loath
The fight should follow, for she favoured both;)
Just as in act he stood, in clouds enshrined,
Her hand she fastened on his hair behind;
Then backward by his yellow curls she drew;
To him, and him alone, confessed in view.
Tamed by superior force, he turned his eyes,
Aghast at first, and stupid with surprise;

But by her sparkling eyes, and ardent look,
The virgin-warrior known, he thus bespoke.
Com'st thou, Celestial, to behold my wrongs?
To view the vengeance which to crimes belongs?
Thus he.—The blue-eyed Goddess thus rejoined:
I come to calm thy turbulence of mind,
If reason will resume her sovereign sway,
And, sent by Juno, her commands obey.
Equal she loves you both, and I protect;
Then give thy guardian Gods their due respect,
And cease contention; be thy words severe,
Sharp as he merits; but the sword forbear.
An hour unhoped already wings her way,
When he his dire affront shall dearly pay;
When the proud king shall sue, with treble gain,
To quit thy loss, and conquer thy disdain.
But thou, secure of my unfailing word,
Compose thy swelling soul, and sheath the sword.—
The youth thus answered mild:—Auspicious maid,
Heaven's will be mine, and your commands obeyed.
The Gods are just, and when, subduing sense,
We serve their Powers, provide the recompence.—
He said; with surly faith believed her word,
And in the sheath, reluctant, plunged the sword.
Her message done, she mounts the blessed abodes,
And mixed among the senate of the Gods.
At her departure his disdain returned;
The fire she fanned with greater fury burned,
Rumbling within till thus it found a vent:—
Dastard and drunkard, mean and insolent!
Tongue-valiant hero, vaunter of thy might,
In threats the foremost, but the lag in fight!
When didst thou thrust amid the mingled preace,
Content to bide the war aloof in peace?
Arms are the trade of each plebeian soul;
'Tis death to fight, but kingly to controul;

Lord-like at ease, with arbitrary power,
To peel the chiefs, the people to devour.
These, traitor, are thy talents; safer far
Than to contend in fields, and toils of war.
Nor couldst thou thus have dared the common hate,
Were not their souls as abject as their state.
But, by this sceptre solemnly I swear,
(Which never more green leaf or growing branch
shall bear;
Torn from the tree, and given by Jove to those
Who laws dispense, and mighty wrongs oppose,)
That when the Grecians want my wonted aid,
No gift shall bribe it, and no prayer persuade.
When Hector comes, the homicide, to wield
His conquering arms, with corpse to strew the field,
Then shalt thou mourn thy pride, and late confess
My wrong, repented when 'tis past redress.—
He said; and with disdain, in open view,
Against the ground his golden sceptre threw,
Then sate; with boiling rage Atrides burned,
And foam betwixt his gnashing grinders churned.
But from his seat the Pylian prince arose,
With reasoning mild, their madness to compose;
Words, sweet as honey, from his mouth distilled;
Two centuries already he fulfilled,
And now began the third; unbroken yet,
Once famed for courage, still in council great.
What worse, he said, can Argos undergo,
What can more gratify the Phrygian foe,
Than these distempered heats, if both the lights
Of Greece their private interest disunites?
Believe a friend, with thrice your years increased,
And let these youthful passions be repressed.
I flourished long before your birth; and then
Lived equal with a race of braver men,
Than these dim eyes shall e'er behold again.

Ceneus and Dryas, and, excelling them,
Great Theseus, and the force of greater Polypheme.
With these I went, a brother of the war,
Their dangers to divide, their fame to share;
Nor idle stood with unassisting hands,
When savage beasts, and men's more savage bands,
Their virtuous toil subdued: yet those I swayed,
With powerful speech; I spoke, and they obeyed.
If such as those my counsels could reclaim,
Think not, young warriors, your diminished name
Shall lose of lustre, by subjecting rage
To the cool dictates of experienced age.
Thou, king of men, stretch not thy sovereign sway
Beyond the bounds free subjects can obey;
But let Pelides in his prize rejoice,
Atchieved in arms, allowed by public voice.
Nor thou, brave champion, with his power contend,
Before whose throne even kings their lowered sceptres bend;
The head of action he, and thou the hand,
Matchless thy force, but mightier his command.
Thou first, O king, release the rights of sway;
Power, self-restrained, the people best obey.
Sanctions of law from thee derive their source;
Command thyself, whom no commands can force.
The son of Thetis, rampire of our host,
Is worth our care to keep, nor shall my prayers be lost.

Thus Nestor said, and ceased.—Atrides broke
His silence next, but pondered ere he spoke:—
Wise are thy words, and glad I would obey,
But this proud man affects imperial sway,
Controuling kings, and trampling on our state;
His will is law, and what he wills is fate.
The Gods have given him strength; but whence the style
Of lawless power assumed, or licence to revile?

Achilles cut him short, and thus replied:—
My worth, allowed in words, is, in effect, denied;
For who but a poltroon, possessed with fear,
Such haughty insolence can tamely bear?
Command thy slaves; my freeborn soul disdains
A tyrant's curb, and, restiff, breaks the reins.
Take this along, that no dispute shall rise
(Though mine the woman) for my ravished prize;
But, she excepted, as unworthy strife,
Dare not, I charge thee dare not, on thy life,
Touch aught of mine beside, by lot my due,
But stand aloof, and think profane to view;
This faulchion else, not hitherto withstood,
These hostile fields shall fatten with thy blood.—
He said, and rose the first; the council broke,
And all their grave consults dissolved in smoke.
The royal youth retired, on vengeance bent;
Patroclus followed silent to his tent.
Meantime, the king with gifts a vessel stores,
Supplies the banks with twenty chosen oars;
And next, to reconcile the shooter God,
Within her hollow sides the sacrifice he stowed;
Chryseis last was set on board, whose hand
Ulysses took, entrusted with command;
They plow the liquid seas, and leave the lessening land.
Atrides then, his outward zeal to boast,
Bade purify the sin-polluted host.
With perfect hecatombs the God they graced,
Whose offered entrails in the main were cast;
Black bulls and bearded goats on altars lie,
And clouds of savoury stench involve the sky.
These pomps the royal hypocrite designed
For show, but harboured vengeance in his mind;
Till holy malice, longing for a vent,
At length discovered his concealed intent.

Talthybius, and Eurybates the just,
Heralds of arms, and ministers of trust,
He called, and thus bespoke:—Haste hence your way,
And from the Goddess-born demand his prey.
If yielded, bring the captive; if denied,
The king (so tell him) shall chastise his pride;
And with armed multitudes in person come
To vindicate his power, and justify his doom.—
This hard command unwilling they obey,
And o'er the barren shore pursue their way,
Where quartered in their camp the fierce Thessalians lay.
Their sovereign seated on his chair they find,
His pensive cheek upon his hand reclined,
And anxious thoughts revolving in his mind.
With gloomy looks he saw them entering in
Without salute; nor durst they first begin,
Fearful of rash offence and death foreseen.
He soon, the cause divining, cleared his brow,
And thus did liberty of speech allow:
Interpreters of Gods and men, be bold;
Awful your character, and uncontrouled:
Howe'er unpleasing be the news you bring,
I blame not you, but your imperious king.
You come, I know, my captive to demand;
Patroclus, give her to the herald's hand.
But you authentic witnesses I bring
Before the Gods, and your ungrateful king,
Of this my manifest, that never more
This hand shall combat on the crooked shore:
No; let the Grecian powers, oppressed in fight,
Unpitied perish in their tyrant's sight.
Blind of the future, and by rage misled,
He pulls his crimes upon his people's head;
Forced from the field in trenches to contend,
And his insulted camp from foes defend.—

He said, and soon, obeying his intent,
Patroclus brought Briseis from her tent,
Then to the entrusted messengers resigned:
She wept, and often cast her eyes behind.
Forced from the man she loved, they led her thence,
Along the shore, a prisoner to their prince.
Sole on the barren sands the suffering chief
Roared out for anguish, and indulged his grief;
Cast on his kindred seas a stormy look,
And his upbraided mother thus bespoke:
Unhappy parent of a short-lived son,—
Since Jove in pity by thy prayers was won
To grace my small remains of breath with fame,
Why loads he this embittered life with shame,
Suffering his king of men to force my slave,
Whom, well deserved in war, the Grecians gave?—
Set by old Ocean's side the Goddess heard,
Then from the sacred deep her head she reared;
Rose like a morning mist, and thus begun
To sooth the sorrows of her plaintive son:—
Why cries my care, and why conceals his smart?
Let thy afflicted parent share her part.—
Then, sighing from the bottom of his breast,
To the Sea-Goddess thus the Goddess-born addressed:
Thou know'st my pain, which telling but recals;
By force of arms we razed the Theban walls;
The ransacked city, taken by our toils,
We left, and hither brought the golden spoils:
Equal we shared them; but before the rest,
The proud prerogative had seized the best.
Chryseis was the greedy tyrant's prize,
Chryseis, rosy-checked, with charming eyes.
Her sire, Apollo's priest, arrived to buy,
With proffered gifts of price, his daughter's liberty.
Suppliant before the Grecian chiefs he stood,
Awful, and armed with ensigns of his God;

Bare was his hoary head'; one holy hand
Held forth his laurel-crown, and one his sceptre of command.
His suit was common, but, above the rest,
To both the brother-princes was addressed.
With shouts of loud acclaim the Greeks agree
To take the gifts, to set the prisoner free.
Not so the tyrant, who with scorn the priest
Received, and with opprobrious words dismissed.
The good old man, forlorn of human aid,
For vengeance to his heavenly patron prayed:
The Godhead gave a favourable ear,
And granted all to him he held so dear;
In an ill hour his piercing shafts he sped,
And heaps on heaps of slaughtered Greeks lay dead,
While round the camp he ranged: at length arose
A seer, who well divined, and durst disclose
The source of all our ills: I took the word;
And urged the sacred slave to be restored,
The God appeased: the swelling monarch stormed,
And then the vengeance vowed he since performed.
The Greeks, 'tis true, their ruin to prevent,
Have to the royal priest his daughter sent;
But from their haughty king his heralds came,
And seized, by his command, my captive dame,
By common suffrage given;—but thou be won,
If in thy power, to avenge thy injured son!
Ascend the skies, and supplicating move
Thy just complaint to cloud-compelling Jove.
If thou by either word or deed hast wrought
A kind remembrance in his grateful thought,
Urge him by that; for often hast thou said
Thy power was once not useless in his aid,
When he, who high above the highest reigns,
Surprised by traitor Gods, was bound in chains;
When Juno, Pallas, with ambition fired,
And his blue brother of the seas conspired,

Thou freed'st the sovereign from unworthy bands,
Thou brought'st Briareus with his hundred hands,
(So called in heaven, but mortal men below
By his terrestrial name, Ægeon, know;
Twice stronger than his sire, who sate above
Assessor to the throne of thundering Jove.)
The Gods, dismayed at his approach, withdrew,
Nor durst their unaccomplished crime pursue.
That action to his grateful mind recal,
Embrace his knees, and at his footstool fall;
That now, if ever, he will aid our foes;
Let Troy's triumphant troops the camp inclose;
Ours, beaten to the shore, the siege forsake,
And what their king deserves, with him partake;
That the proud tyrant, at his proper cost,
May learn the value of the man he lost.—
To whom the Mother-goddess thus replied,
Sighed ere she spoke, and while she spoke she cried,—
Ah wretched me! by fates averse decreed
To bring thee forth with pain, with care to breed!
Did envious heaven not otherwise ordain,
Safe in thy hollow ships thou should'st remain,
Nor ever tempt the fatal field again;
But now thy planet sheds his poisonous rays,
And short and full of sorrow are thy days.
For what remains, to heaven I will ascend,
And at the Thunderer's throne thy suit commend.
Till then, secure in ships, abstain from fight;
Indulge thy grief in tears, and vent thy spite.
For yesterday the court of heaven with Jove
Removed; 'tis dead vacation now above.
Twelve days the Gods their solemn revels keep,
And quaff with blameless Ethiops in the deep.
Returned from thence, to heaven my flight I take,
Knock at the brazen gates, and Providence awake;
Embrace his knees, and suppliant to the sire,
Doubt not I will obtain the grant of thy desire.—

She said, and, parting, left him on the place,
Swoln with disdain, resenting his disgrace:
Revengeful thoughts revolving in his mind,
He wept for anger, and for love he pined.
Meantime, with prosperous gales Ulysses brought
The slave, and ship, with sacrifices fraught,
To Chrysa's port; where, entering with the tide,
He dropped his anchors, and his oars he plyed,
Furled every sail, and, drawing down the mast,
His vessel moored, and made with haulsers fast.
Descending on the plain, ashore they bring
The hecatomb to please the shooter king.
The dame before an altar's holy fire
Ulysses led, and thus bespoke her sire:
Reverenced be thou, and be thy God adored!
The king of men thy daughter has restored,
And sent by me with presents and with prayer.
He recommends him to thy pious care,
That Phœbus at thy suit his wrath may cease,
And give the penitent offenders peace.—
He said; and gave her to her father's hands,
Who glad received her, free from servile bands.
This done, in order they, with sober grace,
Their gifts around the well-built altar place.
Then washed, and took the cakes, while Chryses stood
With hands upheld, and thus invoked his God.
God of the silver bow, whose eyes survey
The sacred Cilla! thou, whose awful sway
Chrysa the blessed, and Tenedos obey!
Now hear, as thou before my prayer hast heard,
Against the Grecians, and their prince, preferred.
Once thou hast honoured, honour once again
Thy priest, nor let his second vows be vain;
But from the afflicted host and humbled prince
Avert thy wrath, and cease thy pestilence!—
Apollo heard, and, conquering his disdain,
Unbent his bow, and Greece respired again.

Now when the solemn rites of prayer were past,
Their salted cakes on crackling flames they cast;
Then, turning back, the sacrifice they sped,
The fatted oxen slew, and flayed the dead;
Chopped off their nervous thighs, and next prepared
To involve the lean in cauls, and mend with lard.
Sweet-breads and collops were with skewers pricked
About the sides, imbibing what they decked.
The priest with holy hands was seen to tine
The cloven wood, and pour the ruddy wine.
The youth approached the fire, and, as it burned,
On five sharp broachers ranked, the roast they turned;
These morsels stayed their stomachs, then the rest
They cut in legs and fillets for the feast;
Which drawn and served, their hunger they appease
With savoury meat, and set their minds at ease.
Now when the rage of eating was repelled,
The boys with generous wine the goblets filled:
The first libations to the gods they pour,
And then with songs indulge the genial hour.
Holy debauch! Till day to night they bring,
With hymns and pæans to the bowyer king.
At sun-set to their ship they make return,
And snore secure on decks till rosy morn.
The skies with dawning day were purpled o'er;
Awaked, with labouring oars they leave the shore;
The Power appeased, with wind sufficed the sail,
The bellying canvas strutted with the gale;
The waves indignant roar with surly pride,
And press against the sides, and, beaten off, divide.
They cut the foamy way, with force impelled
Superior, till the Trojan port they held;
Then, hauling on the strand, their galley moor,
And pitch their tents along the crooked shore.
Meantime the goddess-born in secret pined,
Nor visited the camp, nor in the council joined;

But, keeping close, his gnawing heart he fed
With hopes of vengeance on the tyrant's head;
And wished for bloody wars and mortal wounds,
And of the Greeks oppressed in fight to hear the dying sounds.

Now when twelve days complete had run their race,
The gods bethought them of the cares belonging to their place.
Jove at their head ascending from the sea,
A shoal of puny Powers attend his way.
Then Thetis, not unmindful of her son,
Emerging from the deep to beg her boon,
Pursued their track, and wakened from his rest,
Before the sovereign stood, a morning guest.
Him in the circle, but apart, she found;
The rest at awful distance stood around.
She bowed, and, ere she durst her suit begin,
One hand embraced his knees, one prop'd his chin;
Then thus.—If I, celestial sire, in aught
Have served thy will, or gratified thy thought,
One glimpse of glory to my issue give,
Graced for the little time he has to live!
Dishonoured by the king of men he stands;
His rightful prize is ravished from his hands.
But thou, O father, in my son's defence,
Assume thy power, assert thy providence.
Let Troy prevail, till Greece the affront has paid
With doubled honours, and redeemed his aid.—

She ceased; but the considering God was mute,
Till she, resolved to win, renewed her suit,
Nor loosed her hold, but forced him to reply:—
Or grant me my petition, or deny;
Jove cannot fear; then tell me to my face
That I, of all the gods, am least in grace.
This I can bear.—The cloud-compeller mourned,
And, sighing first, this answer he returned.

Know'st thou what clamours will disturb my reign,
What my stunned ears from Juno must sustain?
In council she gives licence to her tongue,
Loquacious, brawling, ever in the wrong;
And now she will my partial power upbraid,
If, alienate from Greece, I give the Trojans aid.
But thou depart, and shun her jealous sight,
The care be mine to do Pelides right.
Go then, and on the faith of Jove rely,
When, nodding to thy suit, he bows the sky.
This ratifies the irrevocable doom;
The sign ordained, that what I will shall come;
The stamp of heaven, and seal of fate.—He said,
And shook the sacred honours of his head:
With terror trembled heaven's subsiding hill,
And from his shaken curls ambrosial dews distil.
The Goddess goes exulting from his sight,
And seeks the seas profound, and leaves the realms of light.

He moves into his hall; the Powers resort,
Each from his house, to fill the sovereign's court;
Nor waiting summons, nor expecting stood,
But met with reverence, and received the God.
He mounts the throne; and Juno took her place,
But sullen discontent sate lowering on her face.
With jealous eyes, at distance she had seen,
Whispering with Jove, the silver-footed queen;
Then, impotent of tongue, her silence broke,
Thus turbulent, in rattling tone, she spoke.

Author of ills, and close contriver Jove,
Which of thy dames, what prostitute of love,
Has held thy ear so long, and begged so hard,
For some old service done, some new reward?
Apart you talked, for that's your special care;
The consort never must the council share.
One gracious word is for a wife too much;
Such is a marriage vow, and Jove's own faith is such.

Then thus the sire of Gods, and men below:—
What I have hidden, hope not thou to know.
Even goddesses are women; and no wife
Has power to regulate her husband's life.
Counsel she may; and I will give thy ear
The knowledge first of what is fit to hear.
What I transact with others, or alone,
Beware to learn, nor press too near the throne.
To whom the Goddess, with the charming eyes:—
What hast thou said, O tyrant of the skies!
When did I search the secrets of thy reign,
Though privileged to know, but privileged in vain?
But well thou dost, to hide from common sight
Thy close intrigues, too bad to bear the light.
Nor doubt I, but the silver-footed dame,
Tripping from sea, on such an errand came,
To grace her issue at the Grecians' cost,
And, for one peevish man, destroy an host.—
To whom the Thunderer made this stern reply:—
My household curse! my lawful plague! the spy
Of Jove's designs! his other squinting eye!
Why this vain prying, and for what avail?
Jove will be master still, and Juno fail.
Should thy suspicious thoughts divine aright,
Thou but becom'st more odious to my sight
For this attempt; uneasy life to me,
Still watched and importuned, but worse for thee.
Curb that impetuous tongue, before too late
The Gods behold, and tremble at thy fate;
Pitying, but daring not, in thy defence,
To lift a hand against Omnipotence.—
This heard, the imperious queen sate mute with fear,
Nor further durst incense the gloomy Thunderer:
Silence was in the court at this rebuke;
Nor could the Gods abashed sustain their sovereign's look.

The limping Smith observed the saddened feast,
And, hopping here and there, himself a jest,
Put in his word, that neither might offend,
To Jove obsequious, yet his mother's friend.—
What end in heaven will be of civil war,
If Gods of pleasure will for mortals jar?
Such discord but disturbs our jovial feast;
One grain of bad embitters all the best.
Mother, though wise yourself, my counsel weigh;
'Tis much unsafe my sire to disobey;
Not only you provoke him to your cost,
But mirth is marred, and the good chear is lost.
Tempt not his heavy hand, for he has power
To throw you headlong from his heavenly tower;
But one submissive word, which you let fall,
Will make him in good humour with us all.—
He said no more, but crowned a bowl unbid,
The laughing nectar overlooked the lid;
Then put it to her hand, and thus pursued:
This cursed quarrel be no more renewed:
Be, as becomes a wife, obedient still;
Though grieved, yet subject to her husband's will.
I would not see you beaten; yet afraid
Of Jove's superior force, I dare not aid.
Too well I know him, since that hapless hour
When I, and all the Gods, employed our power
To break your bonds; me by the heel he drew,
And o'er heaven's battlements with fury threw.
All day I fell; my flight at morn begun,
And ended not but with the setting sun.
Pitched on my head, at length the Lemnian ground
Received my battered skull, the Sinthians healed my wound.—
At Vulcan's homely mirth his mother smiled,
And, smiling, took the cup the clown had filled.
The reconciler-bowl went round the board,
Which, emptied, the rude skinker still restored.

Loud fits of laughter seized the guests, to see
The limping God so deft* at his new ministry.
The feast continued till declining light;
They drank, they laughed, they loved, and then 'twas night.
Nor wanted tuneful harp, nor vocal quire,
The Muses sung, Apollo touched the lyre.
Drunken at last, and drowsy, they depart
Each to his house, adorned with laboured art
Of the lame architect. The thundering God,
Even he, withdrew to rest, and had his load;
His swimming head to needful sleep applied,
And Juno lay unheeded by his side.

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* Deft for dexterous.

THE

LAST PARTING

OF

HECTOR AND ANDROMACHE.

FROM

THE SIXTH BOOK OF THE ILIAD.

THE ARGUMENT.

Hector returning from the field of battle, to visit Helen, his sister-in-law, and his brother Paris, who had fought unsuccessfully, hand to hand with Menelaus, from thence goes to his own palace to see his wife Andromache, and his infant son Astyanax. The description of that interview is the subject of this translation.

Thus having said, brave Hector went to see
His virtuous wife, the fair Andromache.
He found her not at home; for she was gone,
Attended by her maid and infant son,
To climb the steepy tower of Ilion;
From whence, with heavy heart, she might survey
The bloody business of the dreadful day.
Her mournful eyes she cast around the plain,
And sought the lord of her desires in vain.

But he, who thought his peopled palace bare,
When she, his only comfort, was not there,
Stood in the gate, and asked of every one,
Which way she took, and whither she was gone;
If to the court, or with his mother's train,
In long procession to Minerva's fane?
The servants answered,—Neither to the court,
Where Priam's sons and daughters did resort;
Nor to the temple was she gone, to move
With prayers the blue-eyed progeny of Jove;
But more solicitous for him alone,
Than all their safety, to the tower was gone,
There to survey the labours of the field,
Where the Greeks conquer, and the Trojans yield;
Swiftly she passed, with fear and fury wild;
The nurse went lagging after with the child.

This heard, the noble Hector made no stay,
The admiring throng divide to give him way;
He passed through every street, by which he came,
And at the gate he met the mournful dame.

His wife beheld him; and, with eager pace,
Flew to his arms, to meet a dear embrace.
His wife, who brought in dower Cilicia's crown,
And in herself a greater dower alone;
Aetion's heir, who, on the woody plain
Of Hippoplacus, did in Thebé reign.
Breathless she flew, with joy and passion wild;
The nurse came lagging after with the child.

The royal babe upon her breast was laid,
Who, like the morning star, his beams displayed.
Scamandrius was his name, which Hector gave,
From that fair flood which Ilion's wall did lave;
But him Astyanax the Trojans call,
From his great father who defends the wall.

Hector beheld him with a silent smile,
His tender wife stood weeping by the while;

Pressed in her own, his warlike hand she took,
Then sighed, and thus prophetically spoke:—
Thy dauntless heart, which I foresee too late,
Too daring man, will urge thee to thy fate.
Nor dost thou pity, with a parent's mind,
This helpless orphan, whom thou leav'st behind;
Nor me, the unhappy partner of thy bed,
Who must in triumph by the Greeks be led.
They seek thy life; and, in unequal fight
With many, will oppress thy single might.
Better it were for miserable me
To die, before the fate which I foresee;
For, ah! what comfort can the world bequeath
To Hector's widow, after Hector's death!
Eternal sorrow and perpetual tears
Began my youth, and will conclude my years;
I have no parents, friends, nor brothers left,
By stern Achilles all of life bereft.
Then, when the walls of Thebes he overthrew,
His fatal hand my royal father slew;
He slew Aetion, but despoiled him not,
Nor in his hate the funeral rites forgot;
Armed as he was he sent him whole below,
And reverenced thus the manes of his foe.
A tomb he raised; the mountain-nymphs around
Enclosed, with planted elms, the holy ground.
My seven brave brothers, in one fatal day,
To death's dark mansions took the mournful way;
Slain by the same Achilles, while they keep
The bellowing oxen, and the bleating sheep.
My mother, who the royal sceptre swayed,
Was captive to the cruel victor made,
And hither led; but, hence redeemed with gold,
Her native country did again behold,
And but beheld; for soon Diana's dart,
In an unhappy chace, transfixed her heart.

But thou, my Hector, art thyself alone
My parents, brothers. and my lord, in one.
O, kill not all my kindred o'er again,
Nor tempt the dangers of the dusty plain,
But in this tower, for our defence, remain.
Thy wife and son are in thy ruin lost;
This is a husband's and a father's post.
The Scæan gate commands the plains below;
Here marshal all thy soldiers as they go;
And hence, with other hands, repel the foe.
By yon wild fig-tree lies their chief ascent,
And thither all their powers are daily bent.
The two Ajaces have I often seen,
And the wronged husband of the Spartan queen;
With him his greater brother; and, with these,
Fierce Diomede, and bold Meriones;
Uncertain if by augury, or chance,
But by this easy rise they all advance;
Guard well that pass, secure of all beside.—
To whom the noble Hector thus replied:
That and the rest are in my daily care;
But, should I shun the dangers of the war,
With scorn the Trojans would reward my pains,
And their proud ladies, with their sweeping trains;
The Grecian swords and lances I can bear,
But loss of honour is my only fear.
Shall Hector, born to war, his birth-right yield,
Belie his courage, and forsake the field?
Early in rugged arms I took delight,
And still have been the foremost in the fight;
With dangers dearly have I bought renown,
And am the champion of my father's crown.
And yet my mind forebodes, with sure presage,
That Troy shall perish by the Grecian rage:
The fatal day draws on, when I must fall,
And universal ruin cover all.

Not Troy itself, though built by hands divine,
Nor Priam, nor his people, nor his line,
My mother, nor my brothers of renown,
Whose valour yet defends the unhappy town,—
Not these, nor all their fates which I foresee,
Are half of that concern I have for thee.
I see, I see thee, in that fatal hour,
Subjected to the victor's cruel power;
Led hence a slave to some insulting sword,
Forlorn, and trembling at a foreign lord;
A spectacle in Argos, at the loom,
Gracing with Trojan fights, a Grecian room;
Or from deep wells the living stream to take,
And on thy weary shoulders bring it back.
While, groaning under this laborious life,
They insolently call thee Hector's wife;
Upbraid thy bondage with thy husband's name,
And from my glory propagate thy shame.
This when they say, thy sorrows will increase
With anxious thoughts of former happiness;
That he is dead who could thy wrongs redress.
But I, oppressed with iron sleep before,
Shall hear thy unavailing cries no more.—
He said;
Then, holding forth his arms, he took his boy,
The pledge of love and other hope of Troy.
The fearful infant turned his head away,
And on his nurse's neck reclining lay,
His unknown father shunning with affright,
And looking back on so uncouth a sight;
Daunted to see a face with steel o'erspread,
And his high plume that nodded o'er his head.
His sire and mother smiled with silent joy,
And Hector hastened to relieve his boy;
Dismissed his burnished helm, that shone afar,
The pride of warriors, and the pomp of war;

She laid hire mouth unto the water doun.
Bewrey me not, thou water, with thy soun,
Quod she; to thee I tell it, and no mo,
Min husbond hath long asses eres two.
Now is min herte all hole, now is it out,
I might no lenger kepe it out of dout.
Here may ye see, though we a time abide,
Yet out it moste; we can no conseil hide.
The remenant of the Tale, if ye wol here,
Redeth Ovide, and ther ye may it lere.

This knight, of which my Tale is specially,
Whan that he saw he might not come therby,
(This is to sayn, what women loven most)
Within his brest ful sorweful was his gost.
But home he goth, he mighte not sojourne;
The day was come that homward must he turne.
And in his way it happed him to ride,
In all his care, under a forest side,
Wheras he saw upon a dance go
Of ladies foure and twenty, and yet mo.
Toward this ilke dance he drow ful yerne,
In hope that he som wisdom shulde lerne;
But certainly er he came fully there
Yvanished was this dance he n'iste not wher;
No creature saw he that bare lif,
Save on the grene he saw sitting a wif,
A fouler wight ther may no man devise.
Againe this knight this olde wif gan arise,
And saide Sire Knight, here forth ne lith no way.
Tell me what that ye seken by your fay,
Paraventure it may the better be:
Thise olde folk con mochel thing, quod she.

My leve mother, quod this knight, certain
I n'am but ded but if that I can fain
What thing it is that women most desire:
Coude ye me wisse I wold quite wel your hire.
Plight me thy trothe here in myn hond, quod she,
The nexte thing that I requere of thee
Thou shalt it do, if it be in thy might,
And I wol tell it you or it be night.

Have here my trouthe, quod the knight, I graunte.

Thanne, quod she, I dare me wel avaunte
Thy lif is sauf, for I wol stond therby,
Upon my lif the quene wol say as I.
Let see which is the proudest of hem alle,
That wereth on a kerchef or a calle,

That dare sayn nay of that I shal you teche.
Let us go forth withouten lenger speche.
Tho rowned she a pistel in his ere,
And bad him to be glad, and have no fere.
Whan they ben comen to the court, this knight
Said he had hold his day as he had hight,
And redy was his answere, as he saide.
Ful many a noble wif, and many a maide,
And many a widewe, for that they ben wise,
(The quene hireself sitting as a justice)
Assembled ben his answer for to here,
And afterward this knight was bode appere.
To every wight commanded was silence,
And that the knight shuld tell in audience
What thing that worldly women loven best.
This knight ne stood not still as doth a best,
But to this question anon answerd
With manly vois, that all the court it herd.
My liege Lady, generally, quod he,
Women desiren to han soverainetee,
As well over hir husbond as hir love,
And for to ben in maistrie him above.
This is your most desire, though ye me kille;
Doth as you list, I am here at your wille.
In all the court ne was ther wif ne maide,
Ne widewe, that contraried that he saide,
But said he was worthy to han his lif.
And with that word up stert this olde wif
Which that the knight saw sitting on the grene.
Mercy, quod she, my soveraine lady Quene,
Er that your court depart, as doth me right.
I taughte this answer unto this knight,
For which he plighte me his trouthe there,
The firste thing I wold of him requere,
He wold it do, if it lay in his might.
Before this court than pray I thee, Sire, Knight,
Quod she, that thou me take unto thy wif,
For wel thou wost that I have kept thy lif:
If I say false, say nay upon thy fay.
This knight answered, Alas and wala wa!
I wot right wel that swiche was my behest.
For Goddes love as chese a new request:
Take all my good, and let my body go.
Nay than, quod she, I shrewe us bothe two:
For though that I be olde, foule, and pore,
I n'olde for all the metal ne the ore

That under erthe is grave, or lith above,
But if thy wif I were and eke thy love.
My love? quod he; nay, my dampnation.
Alas! that any of my nation
Shuld ever so foule disparaged be.
But all for nought; the end is this, that he
Constrained was, he nedes must hire wed,
And taketh this olde wif, and goth to bed.
Now wolden som men sayn paraventure,
That for my negligence I do no cure
To tellen you the joye and all the array
That at the feste was that ilke day.
To which thing shortly answeren I shal:
I say ther was no joye ne feste at al;
Ther n'as but hevinesse and mochel sorwe;
For prively he wedded hire on the morwe,
And all day after hid him as an oule,
So wo was him his wif loked so foule.
Gret was the wo the knight had in his thought
Whan he was with his wif a-bed ybrought;
He walweth, and he turneth to and fro.
This olde wif lay smiling evermo,
And said, O dere husbond, *benedicite!*
Fareth ever knight thus with wif as ye?
Is this the lawe of King Artoures hous?
Is every knight of his thus dangerous?
I am your owen love, and eke your wif,
I am she which that saved hath your lif,
And certes yet did I you never unright;
Why fare ye thus with me this firste night?
Ye faren like a man had lost his wit.
What is my gilt? for Goddess love tell it,
And it shal ben amended if I may.
Amended? quod this knight, alas! nay, nay,
It wol not ben amended never mo;
Thou art so lothly, and so olde also,
And therto comen of so low a kind,
That little wonder is though I walwe and wind;
So wolde God min herte wolde brest.
Is this, quod she, the cause of your unrest?
Ye certainly, quod he, no wonder is.
Now Sire, quod she, I coude amend all this,
If that me list, er it were dayes three,
So wel ye mighten bere you unto me.
But for ye speken of swiche gentillesse
As is descended out of old richesse;

That therefore shullen ye be gentilmen;
Swiche arrogance n'is not worth an hen.
Loke who that is most vertuous alway,
Prive and apert, and most entendeth ay
To do the gentil dedes that he can,
And take him for the gretest gentilman.
Crist wol we claime of him our gentillesse,
Not of our elders for hir old richesse;
For though they yeve us all hir heritage,
For which we claime to ben of high parage,
Yet may they not bequethen for no thing
To non of us hir vertuous living,
That made hem gentilmen called to be,
And bade us folwen hem in swiche degree.
Wel can the wise poet of Florence,
That highte Dant, speken of this sentence:
Lo in swiche maner rime is Dantes tale.
Ful selde up riseth by his branches smale
Prowesse of man, for God of his goodnesse
Wol that we claime of him our gentillesse;
For our elders may we nothing claime
But temporel thing, that man may hurt and maime.
Eke every wight wot this as wel as I,
If gentillesse were planted naturelly
Unto a certain linage doun the line,
Prive and apert, than wold they never fine
To don of gentillesse the faire office;
They mighten do no vilanie or vice.
Take fire, and bere it into the derkest hous
Betwix this and the Mount of Caucasus,
And let men shette the dores, and go thenne,
Yet wol the fire as faire lie and brenne
As twenty thousand men might it behold;
His office naturel ay wol it hold,
Up peril of my lif, til that it die.
Here may ye see wel how that genterie
Is not annexed to possession,
Sith folk ne don hir operation
Alway, as doth the fire, lo, in his kind:
For God it wot men moun ful often find
A lordes sone do shame and vilanie.
And he that wol han pris of his genterie,
For he was boren of a gentil hous,
And had his elders noble and vertuous,
And n'ill himselven do no gentil dedes,
Ne folwe his gentil auncestrie that ded is,

The illustrious babe, thus reconciled, he took,
Hugged in his arms, and kissed, and thus he spoke:—
Parent of Gods and men, propitious Jove!
And you, bright synod of the powers above!
On this my son your gracious gifts bestow;
Grant him to live, and great in arms to grow,
To reign in Troy, to govern with renown,
To shield the people, and assert the crown;
That, when hereafter he from war shall come,
And bring his Trojans peace and triumph home,
Some aged man, who lives this act to see,
And who, in former times, remembered me,
May say, the son, in fortitude and fame,
Outgoes the mark, and drowns his father's name:
That, at these words, his mother may rejoice,
And add her suffrage to the public voice.—
Thus having said;
He first, with suppliant hands, the Gods adored;
Then to the mother's arms the child restored.
With tears and smiles she took her son, and pressed
The illustrious infant to her fragrant breast.
He, wiping her fair eyes, indulged her grief,
And eased her sorrows with this last relief:—
My wife and mistress, drive thy fears away,
Nor give so bad an omen to the day;
Think not it lies in any Grecian's power
To take my life, before the fatal hour.
When that arrives, nor good nor bad can fly
The irrevocable doom of destiny.
Return; and, to divert thy thoughts at home,
There task thy maids, and exercise the loom,
Employed in works that womankind become.
The toils of war, and feats of chivalry
Belong to men; and, most of all, to me.—
At this, for new replies he did not stay,
But laced his crested helm, and strode away.

His lovely consort to her house returned,
And, looking often back, in silence mourned.
Home when she came, her secret woe she vents,
And fills the palace with her loud laments;
Those loud laments her echoing maids restore,
And Hector, yet alive, as dead deplore.

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